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THE TIMES

INTERNATIONAL EDITION

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45p



HOME GROAN
For many people in Britain, home ownership is an unnecessary liability, says Janet Daley
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DYING BREED
Life after Pavarotti will be saner and quieter with a different breed of superstar
Life & Times Page 1



IMAGE IS ALL
Simon Barnes reflects on the images that made the Barcelona Olympic Games unforgettable
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SCHOOL HOLS
Neil Lyndon discovers that the perfect holiday is like going back to the classroom
Life & Times Page 1

Military shield for aid convoys

Britain, France and US agree on Bosnia force

By JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK AND ROBIN OAKLEY IN LONDON

THE US State Department announced last night that it had reached agreement with Britain and France on a draft United Nations resolution permitting the use of force to get humanitarian aid into Bosnia-Herzegovina. The agreement, which calls for unlimited access to detention centres as well as protecting aid convoys, may be presented to the UN Security Council for approval as early as tomorrow. The draft leaves it up to UN member states to take military action to protect aid shipments, because Boutros Boutros Ghali, the UN secretary-general, had rejected any fighting role for UN peacekeeping troops. However, the agreement insists that any military action be taken "in co-ordination with the United Nations", because Britain and France had been concerned by Dr Boutros Ghali's intention to withdraw the 1,600 UN troops from Sarajevo airport and to wash his hands of the Bosnian conflict. The security council resolution does not address the key question of which countries or organisations will provide ground troops to protect the convoys. Yesterday Nato began drawing up contingency plans at an emergency council meeting and military officials will today begin asking member states what forces they are prepared to contribute. The Western European Union said a military mission to protect convoys should be run by Europeans with American air support. The text calls on all states "to take all necessary measures to facilitate, in co-ordination with the United Nations, the delivery by the relevant humanitarian organisations of humanitarian assistance to Sarajevo and, wherever needed, to other parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina". The draft agreed by the three Western allies also calls for an end to the fighting in the former Yugoslav republic. A Western diplomat involved in the UN talks said Russia had promised its support, although China was still studying the draft. The diplomat said the measure might be passed unanimously. The UN human rights commission, which will meet in Geneva on Thursday and Friday, is expected to demand full and immediate access to all detention camps by the International Committee of the Red Cross and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. The British section of the International Society for Human Rights yesterday issued a report listing 11 Serb-controlled prison camps in Bosnia where it said civilians had been executed. The report said "thousands may have been killed in camps in Prijedor and Foca, where executions are appearing on a daily basis". The group, based in Germany, used to campaign against abuses in communist countries. Paddy Ashdown, in Bosnia to inspect the camps, said yesterday that he had not yet been able to get to Gorazde, where 70,000 Muslims are under siege by Serbian forces. He called for military action to prevent the conflict in Bosnia spreading to Kosovo. "If there was the will, we could do more to limit the intensity of this campaign," he said. "I think the resources are there for us to be doing more."

Although John Major is reluctant to see British ground troops involved in the new operations, their deployment is not being ruled out if British air cover is provided. Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, told BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme that troops would not be used to "separate the combatants". Downing Street brushed aside criticism from Haris Silajdzic, Bosnia's foreign minister, who said in Pakistan that the prime minister was merely issuing statements. "The liberation of our country will only be through arms," Mr Silajdzic said. Europe was stepping up diplomatic pressure on Serbia yesterday. Klaus Kinkel, the German foreign minister, said Bonn might break off diplomatic relations, and Jacques Delors, president of the European Commission, told the European parliament that only the threat of military intervention would deflect Serbia from a strategy of "nationalist hatred". In Brussels Douglas Hogg, minister of state at the Foreign Office, held talks with EC officials to achieve better enforcement of sanctions against the rump Yugoslavians, particularly the oil embargo.



Heroes' welcome: Britain's Olympic gold medallists, Sally Gunnell and Linford Christie, share a joke on their return to Heathrow

TODAY IN THE TIMES

Shares fall to Gulf low

The London stockmarket closed at its lowest level since the end of the Gulf war after sharp overnight falls in Tokyo. Investors are concerned about the economy and the pound. Some brokers have said that share prices are still too high. Page 15
Stock Market, page 18

Nickell murder suspect moved

A 26-year-old photographic student, was driven by police from Liverpool to a south London police station last night to be questioned by Scotland Yard detectives investigating the murder of Rachel Nickell on Wimbledon Common. Page 2

Identity given

Police yesterday named the woman whose remains were discovered on a hillside in Somerset as Asha Bostan, 22, who vanished 14 years ago. Page 3

Pollution claim

Britain has become the largest source of pollution in the northeast Atlantic, Greenpeace says in a report published today. Page 5

UN secrecy

Secrecy shrouded the mission of United Nations inspectors in Iraq as they hunted for details of President Saddam Hussein's arms programmes. Page 7

Belgrade blocked, page 9

Winning votes, page 10
Leading article and letters, page 11

BT likely to cut bills

By ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT
BRITISH Telecom has given in to pressure from OfTel, the telecommunications watchdog, to bring in pricing constraints that should cut both household and business telephone bills. Negotiators were still working on the fine print of the agreement but were confident that a deal would be announced today. BT has undertaken in principle to keep price increases at 7.5 per cent below the rate of inflation for the next five years, and has agreed to further constraints that will result in reduced bills. The agreement will mean BT acquiescing to a much tougher price control regime. Full details, page 15

Small quake in north London ... not many deaf

By NICK NUTTALL
RESIDENTS of three north London tower blocks raised the alarm after their homes began swaying gently, causing furniture to slide across the floor, a balcony to crack and a window to fracture. Convinced that a small earthquake was occurring, police and fire brigade arrived to carry out safety checks as worried residents gathered outside. But scientists, after carefully checking seismic records, have decided that the phenomenon owed less to movement of the Earth's tectonic plates than to the driving beat of the charts. During the time the "earthquakes" were felt, between 9pm and 9.45pm on Saturday, the group Madness were holding a concert in the nearby Finsbury Park area. Researchers at the British Geological Survey in Edinburgh, who run the country's network of seismic detectors, suspect the band were using equipment that generates inaudible vibrations that simulate those of an earthquake. Unlike a true earthquake, however, in which vibrations happen underground and travel some distance through the rocks, they believe the equipment generated shorter-lived vibrations along the surface. Chris Brown, a scientist at the survey, said there was a precedent for the rock 'n' roll theory. On October 27, 1984, and on July 8, 1987, colleagues at the Royal Observatory in Brussels detected similar effects generated by Irish rock band U2. The Belgian scientists had a seismic detector five kilometres away which picked up the vibrations. It registered a monosonic signal at a frequency of 1.8 hertz, lasting for about four minutes, which was repeated at roughly every ten minutes and felt by people up to 500 kilometres away. Further research by the Belgians linked the vibrations with infrasound, or sub-audible vibrations, made by generators which work with the music and sound systems to provide effects. "We suspect something similar happened with respect to the Madness concert ... we would like to know if they were using infrasound," said Dr Brown. Although famous for hits such as *House of Fun*, residents in the Green Lane, Rowley Gardens and Anwell Court area of north London believe Madness must have been playing the old standard *Shakin' All Over*. One resident, who lives near the top of an eight-storey tower block, told survey scientists that his settee had swayed. "He told us that in that particular tower block people on the fifth floor down did not feel anything. So it was the top floors, which is what you would expect in an earthquake," Dr Brown said. As used as ever, Life & Times section, page 2

Judiciary pays last tributes to Devlin

By ALAN HAMILTON

THE LAW yesterday paid generous tribute to Lord Devlin, the former High Court judge who died on Sunday night at his Wiltshire home aged 86 after a brief illness. Lord Devlin, best remembered for presiding over the acquittal of John Bodkin Adams in one of the most gripping murder trials of the century, retired from the judiciary in 1964 at the early age of 58, but remained active for the rest of his life: in recent years he was a leading campaigner for the release of the Birmingham Six and the Guildford Four. John Rowe, QC, vice-chairman of the Bar, said yesterday that Lord Devlin was one of the outstanding judges of his generation, with a particularly incisive mind and a strong sense of independence. Lord Denning, the former Master of the Rolls under whom Lord Devlin briefly served in the Court of Appeal, said he was one of the best commercial lawyers of our time, who delivered many important judgments. Lord Jenkins of Hillhead said Lord Devlin had one of the most original and acute legal minds of his generation. Cardinal Basil Hume, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, said he was "an outstanding servant of truth and justice".

Unionists demand Sinn Fein ban after UDA is outlawed

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

UNIONIST politicians last night demanded that the government follow its decision to outlaw the Ulster Defence Association by banning Sinn Fein, the political wing of the IRA. They criticised Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Northern Ireland secretary, for failing to extend the proscription to include Sinn Fein which they alleged was involved in the sectarian killing of Protestants. But a Downing Street source said that while the government condemned Sinn Fein because of its support for violence, the organisation was not actively and primarily involved in terrorist activity. The source pointed to a further difficulty in that Sinn Fein, unlike the UDA, has considerable support at the ballot box having won one-third of the nationalist votes cast at the general election. From midnight anyone involved in the UDA, the largest loyalist paramilitary organisation, faces up to ten years in jail. Under the ban, announced by Sir Patrick, it becomes illegal to seek financial support for the UDA or to knowingly contribute to it or to encourage a person to carry out orders given by the organisation. The UDA leadership responded to the ban by saying they would always be there to "defend and protect our community". It added that the ban had come as no surprise and that the prospect of proscription had influenced their strategy over the past two years. Last night police and troops were on full alert although the police expect any trouble to be little more than isolated incidents. Michael Mates, the security minister, said any defiance by the UDA would merely confirm that it was the right decision to ban it. He added that he did not anticipate defiance as he believed the organisation had expected the ban. Sir Patrick banned the organisation after a three-and-a-half month review of its activities. An assessment was underway before the general election and Sir Patrick has had consultations with Sir Hugh Annesley, the Royal Ulster Constabulary chief constable and Lieutenant

General John Wilesey, the General Officer Commanding, in the province. He spoke to the prime minister about the ban before John Major left for Spain last week. Sir Patrick said yesterday he was satisfied that the UDA was "actively and primarily engaged in the commission of criminal terrorist acts".

The decision to prohibit the UDA, whose membership has fallen from an estimated 42,000 in 1972 to about 1,000, was welcomed by politicians in London, Dublin and by nationalist politicians in the province. Although the Department of Foreign Affairs continued on page 14, col 1

Ban delay, page 2

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Masked men: members of the Ulster Defence Association in the Protestant Shankill Road area of Belfast. In the early 1970s it had an estimated 40,000 members

How Ulster's 'strong arm' was shackled

DEMANDS for the banning of the Ulster Defence Association have been as much a part of recent history in Northern Ireland as the ritual condemnation of murder and sectarian slaughter.

Until yesterday, Conservative and Labour governments had been reluctant to outlaw the organisation, in spite of its record of murder, extortion, intimidation, gun-running and racketeering. Why it has taken ministers so long to act against the UDA is one of the great mysteries of direct rule.

A number of arguments have been advanced. In the early years the organisation was so large, and had such support within Loyalist working class areas, that it would have been an impossible task to enforce a ban. Others argued that the security forces could combat the organisation more easily if it remained legal rather than being driven underground. Others hoped that it could be persuaded to abandon violence and enter the political process.

One further reason was put

forward rather more discreetly. It was that the organisation had been compromised by informers and agents. This argument was given credence earlier this year when Brian Nelson admitted 20 terrorist offences, including conspiracy to kill five men, when he appeared at Belfast Crown Court. Nelson was a British army agent who had been chief intelligence officer in the UDA for ten years.

Founded in 1971, the Ulster Defence Association was and remains the largest Loyalist paramilitary organisation. It was set up to co-ordinate vigilante groups that had sprung up on working class areas of Belfast and other urban areas and was initially a defensive reaction to IRA violence.

It adopted the motto *Law before Violence*, organised on military lines and, at its peak in 1972, had an estimated membership of 40,000 people, who paraded in paramilitary-style outfits and provided the strong-arm tactics in support of Loyalist protests. Its largest demonstrations took place in the summer of

Richard Ford traces the history of the Ulster Defence Association and the rising clamour of demands to tame it

1972 when, watched by the police and army, thousands of men in caps or bush hats marched through the centre of Belfast.

During that same summer, about 8,000 UDA men, in paramilitary uniforms and armed with iron bars, confronted 250 troops in west Belfast over plans for Loyalist barricades between Protestant and Catholic districts.

The organisation reached its zenith in 1974 when its members provided the mus-

cle in the Ulster Workers Council strike that ended the Sunningdale agreement and the power-sharing government of Brian Faulkner. Its intimidatory tactics, particularly in mounting road blocks, paralysed the province and the newly elected government of Harold Wilson.

The government did not forget the lessons of that humiliation and a second strike in 1977 was much less successful. By the time of the

Anglo-Irish agreement in 1985, the association's influence had waned considerably and its reputation for gangsterism meant that most Unionist politicians were unwilling to use it to break the accord.

The association was disenchanted and suspicious of politicians. Its heartlands were suffering high unemployment, the security forces were better equipped and they would have been confronting Margaret Thatcher, whose reputation for not giving in had a powerful psychological effect on the thinking of the wider Loyalist community. By 1985, its membership had declined to less than 10,000.

The organisation, whose headquarters were in east Belfast, was run by a seven-man inner council with a brigade structure, headed by commanders, in the east, west, south and north of the city. Its supreme commander from 1973-88 was Andrew Tyrrie, who was initially said to be trying to clean up its image, though he was unable to stop its descent into gang-

sterism and racketeering. The city's licensed trade and the building industry were the main targets and, at one stage, the association was estimated to be making £2 million a year from drinking clubs.

It also attempted to project a political dimension putting forward such ideas as negotiated independence for Northern Ireland and an all-party coalition to run the province under a written constitution and Bill of Rights. Forays into electoral politics produced only negligible support.

By the late 1980s the organisation was dissolving into factions. In the space of a year, all members of its inner council were replaced by a younger element intent on weeding out informers and taking the struggle to the Republicans. They gave a harder and more professional edge to its activities, resulting in increased violence in which, under the cover name of the Ulster Freedom Fighters, it promised to match the IRA atrocity for atrocity.

Sinn Féin ban urged, page 1

Banned organisations	Year banned
Republican	1918
Irish Republican Army	1918
Irish National Liberation Army	1973
Irish People's Liberation Organisation	1973
Saor Éire	1973
Cumann na mBeann (Women's section of IRA)	1973
Fianna na hEireann (Youth section of IRA)	1973
Loyalist	1973
Ulster Freedom Fighters	1973
Ulster Volunteer Force	1975
Red Hand Commandos	1973
Ulster Defence Association	1992

Deaf given hope by guinea pig

By Nick Nuttall
Technology Correspondent

BRITISH scientists have made a surprising discovery that may offer hope for people with apparently permanent deafness. Guinea pigs that became deaf after being given powerful antibiotics have suddenly regained some or all of their hearing.

The findings, the fruit of more than three years' research, have been made by a team at Keele University, whose results are to be published in the journal *Hearing Research*.

Inner ear deafness, the most common form of hearing loss, which occurs in some patients given powerful antibiotics for such illnesses as TB and meningitis, in older people, and after exposure to loud noise, was thought to be irreversible.

Carole Hackney, leader of the auditory neuroanatomy group in the university's department of communication and neuroscience, said: "The first time we saw it happen we thought there was something wrong with our computers or something else... we did not quite believe it".

In people who suffer inner ear deafness the sensory hairs of the inner ear appear to die or become damaged. The hairs normally translate sound vibrations into nerve impulses that are sent to the brain.

The first evidence that animals might be able to recover spontaneously from damage to the inner ear was in birds by two teams in America. "This research was greeted with great scepticism," Dr Hackney said. At the same time the Keele scientists were testing guinea pigs to see how damage occurred, rather than find signs of repair and recovery. Fifteen animals were used, and all have regained hearing three to four months after becoming deaf.

If the natural mechanism aiding repair in guinea pigs can be understood it may offer clues as to how this can be promoted in other mammals, including humans, the team hopes.

One-stop benefits system will lead to staff cuts

By Jeremy Laurance, Social Services Correspondent

A STREAMLINED social security system with a "one-stop" shop for claimants would improve standards of service but mean cuts in the 70,000 staff, Peter Lilley, the social security secretary, said yesterday. His remarks were condemned by unions, which said staff cuts would lead to a worse service.

Mr Lilley said claimants had to cope with a welter of rules governing 25 benefits — such as child benefit, income support and housing benefit — which are claimed, processed and paid in different ways. A single point providing the full range of benefits was a step towards fulfilling the agency's customer charter, he said. The charter promised a "prompt and accurate" system backed by "clear and accessible" help and information.

Claimants would be able to apply for different benefits in the same place instead of having to visit separate offices, Mr Lilley said. The proposals would help to reduce fraud and cut handling costs. "As we get more efficient there may be fewer jobs but the jobs that there are will be more interesting and rewarding," he said.

Ann Robinson, head of policy at the Institute of Social Security, said the proposals had been agreed with staff. "Ultimately it is going to mean fewer jobs. We accept that that is inevitable but it will not happen over-

night." Unions representing staff in benefits offices reacted angrily.

The Civil and Public Servants Association, representing 36,000 staff, said: "We are gob-smacked that the minister should be talking about staff cuts, given rising unemployment and the increasing pressure on offices."

It said the plan was about "pleasing Michael Portillo not pleasing the customer".

Mr Portillo, chief secretary to the Treasury, is looking for cuts in the £70 billion social security budget as part of this year's public spending negotiations.

The National Union of Civil and Public Servants, representing 20,000 staff, said: "The real test is whether any money saved by administrative changes is used to introduce improvements to the social security service."



Lilley: step towards fulfilling customer charter

Auntie bares all in vampire soap opera

By Simon Tait
Arts Correspondent

BBC TELEVISION is to begin filming an £800,000 serial this week that will combine nudity, violence, terror and the supernatural. *The Vampire* is an almost forgotten opera from the 1820s that has not been performed for 45 years and has never been recorded.

The mini-series will run over five consecutive days later this year, using the original music of the German composer Heinrich Marschner, with lyrics by Charles Hart, whose credits include *The Phantom of the Opera* and *Aspects of Love*. It will be produced by Janet Street-Porter, head of youth and entertainment features at

the BBC. The series will be broadcast on BBC2 after 9pm because of the nudity and violence.

The director is Nigel Finch, co-editor of BBC2's *Arena* documentary series. "We're not aiming this at the opera buffs," he said. "We're addressing the problem that opera doesn't work easily on television and by taking a piece and dividing it up into five episodes with a cliff-hanger at the end of each, we're doing something that's never been tried before on opera soap opera."

Opera Factory, which has established a name for unconventional productions of classical opera, some of which have been televised, was commissioned to find three ideas, from which *The Vampire* was chosen.

The production will star Richard Van Allen, Omar Ibrahim as the vampire and Fiona O'Neill, who has featured in previous Opera Factory productions, as his final victim.

The opera was successful when first produced in 1829, running for 60 performances at the Lyceum in The Strand, but it has hardly been produced since. Marschner's music is rarely played now. The narrative is a gothic tale of a vampire offered an extra year on Earth if he can drain the blood of three women in three days. Predating Bram Stoker's novel, *Dracula*, by almost 60 years, the opera borrows from several vampire myths popular in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

"The storyline is updated and set in

the 1990s, with the Jords and ladies replaced by City whizz kids and their girlfriends," Mr Finch said. "There is an overture which works as a dramatic theme tune, a good aria for each episode and we'll be using techniques such as special effects."

Instead of the vampire lurking in catacombs, the 1990s version lives in the penthouse flat on top of a bank-rupt Docklands office block. Ms Street-Porter said: "Nigel and I wanted to work together on a ground-breaking project and our ambition is to bring opera to a new and wider audience via television. Combining a sharp score, which is unaltered from the nineteenth century original, and a modern story, we hope to achieve that result."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Yard questions man on Nickell murder

A 26-year-old photographic student was driven by police from Liverpool to a south London police station last night to be questioned by Scotland Yard detectives investigating the murder of Rachel Nickell on Wimbledon Common three weeks ago. Simon Murrell was arrested at his home after a tip-off to police from a member of the public on Merseyside.

Miss Nickell died on the common on July 15. She was stabbed as she walked her two-year-old son and the family dog through a copse. Her son, Alex, was found clinging to her body and had also been attacked.

Mr Murrell, originally a Londoner, has lived in Liverpool for the past year and is believed to have been in London at the time of the murder. Last night Scotland Yard underlined that other men had also been arrested during the investigation and then released. Hampshire police confirmed yesterday that they had been in touch with the Yard about links to Karle Rackcliff, 19, killed at Camberley in June. So far no connection has been found.

Spy case extension

Scotland Yard's special branch was given court permission to continue questioning a couple about espionage allegations, involving weapons technology and an eastern European country, for a further 36 hours. Magistrates in London agreed to allow detectives to continue to hold the couple at Paddington Green police station, west London, for questioning under the Official Secrets Act. Michael Smith, an unemployed engineer, and his wife, Pam, of Kingston upon Thames, southwest London, were arrested at the weekend and have already been held for 60 hours. Any decision to prosecute under the Official Secrets Act would involve the permission of the attorney-general. The progress of the investigation would be passed to the Crown Prosecution Service.

Holiday collapse feared

The first tremor of what could become a wholesale collapse among small independent travel companies was felt yesterday as Manchester Flight Centre ceased trading and was forced to call on its bond to bring back more than 2,000 customers on holiday. The company was one of hundreds set up over the past few years to trade in seat-only flights. Each company had to deposit a bond of up to 15 per cent of its turnover to act as an insurance cover in the event of its failing. This year many of the big operators entered the market to limit their losses from thousands of unsold package holidays. The crunch for other seat-only dealers is expected to come at the end of the month, when bills for next month's flying programme have to be paid.

Dentists support NHS

More than half all dentists are continuing to accept new NHS patients despite a ballot last month in which 80 per cent said they were prepared to stop. The telephone survey of 350 dental practices indicates that while the threat to state-funded dental services is significant it might be less than previously supposed. The findings are, however, much worse than a government-sponsored survey published last February, which found that only one in four dentists were prepared to turn away new NHS patients. The latest survey was carried out for *Which? Way to Health*, the Consumers' Association magazine. In a separate survey for the association, only 3 per cent of the 2,000 patients interviewed said they had been forced to go private after being refused NHS dental treatment during their last visit.

New penalty for pupils

Penalties for bad spelling in GCSE examinations are to be extended to cover course work as a result of increasing concern about poor standards. At the moment up to 5 per cent can be added to pupils' marks for good spelling, grammar and punctuation in their final exams, in effect penalising poor performers. Ministers have decided that this should also apply to course work in the two years prior to the GCSE exam, although this now accounts for a decreasing proportion of the final result in most subjects. From this September, 40 per cent of the English GCSE will be based on course work, 30 per cent of the English literature exam and 30 per cent of science. Baroness Blatch, the education minister, will give details of the penalty system today.

Fireworks explosion

Three-and-a-half tonnes of fireworks exploded in underground storage bunkers after a fire spread through a fireworks warehouse at a former ammunition dump in Fould, Staffordshire. The explosions sent flames shooting out of doors to the bunkers, owned by Fireworks International, and smoke was visible two miles away. It is believed the fire started during maintenance work on the doors. No one was injured. The concrete building housing the fireworks was built partially underground and covered with soil. The first explosion rocked the building but Keith Wiggins, senior divisional fire officer, said: "It's performed its job very, very well. It's contained the fire and contained any explosions that occurred." Firefighters controlled flames which had spread to surrounding grassland.

Rare ailment kills girl

A baby who could not be cuddled because of a rare skin disease died yesterday, days after Tommy and Lorraine Wilson, her parents, of Ouston, Durham, raised £10,000 to combat the illness. Kirsty Wilson was born less than six months ago with epidermolysis bullosa, an incurable ailment that causes painful blisters whenever the skin is touched. She was one of a handful of sufferers in Britain. Earlier this year a picture of her was used by a charity in a campaign to raise £1 million for research. A recent medical breakthrough means that a successful treatment could be only five years away if enough money is raised. The campaign is being organised by the Dysphoric Epidermolysis Bullosa Research Association, of 1 Kings Road, Crowthorne, Berkshire, RG11 7BG.

Joint drink-drivers

Police arrested two men for drink-driving in the same car at the same time. Richard Browning, who uses a wheelchair, was steering and changing gears while Colin Smith, his friend, operated the clutch. Officers at first thought Smith must have been the driver, but their video film showed both men had been in control of Smith's Triumph Dolomite. The men, both 20, and from Hailsham, East Sussex, failed breath tests. They admitted drink-driving, not having insurance and having no driving licence. Smith, who is unemployed, was banned from driving for 18 months and fined a total of £500 by magistrates at Eastbourne, East Sussex. The sentencing of Browning was adjourned until October after the court was told that another drink-driving case was due to be heard against him.

Hodgson takes lead

Julian Hodgson, the grandmaster from London, yesterday beat James Howell in the seventh round of the British Chess Championship in Plymouth and now leads with six points. Hodgson, playing black, overcame his opponent after defending with the risky dragon variation of the Sicilian defence, forcing Howell into severe time trouble. Jonathan Mestel, the grandmaster and three times former champion from Cambridge, has still to finish his seventh round game against Jon Levitt. Mestel holds a slight advantage and victory will give him the shared lead. John Emms, who beat Andrew Webster, is on 5½ points, while Andrew Martin and Aaron Summerscale are on five points, beating respectively Andrew Ledger and Michael Basman in the 11 game tournament.

1978 murder hunt revived as body in hills is identified

By BILL FROST

POLICE yesterday named the woman whose remains were discovered on a hillside in Somerset. Dental records and articles showed her to be Asha Bostan, 22, an insurance agent who vanished 14 years ago.

Murder squad officers said yesterday that they might travel to Japan to interview a former boyfriend, and others, in the hunt for Miss Bostan's killer. Det Supt Barry Stone, who is heading the investigation, told a press conference at Bridgewater, Somerset, that Miss Bostan was last seen alive early on May 3, 1978, at the Unicorn Hotel, Bristol, with her fiancé, Yasuo Soma. "She left after they had rowed," he said and she was never seen again.

The dead woman's sister, Saida Sparrow, from Yeovil, Somerset, said that Mr Soma had returned to Japan after the disappearance and had not been in touch with the family since. She said that Miss Bostan, who lived in a flat in Westbury on Trym, Bristol, was one of 11 brothers and sisters in a family of Ugandan Asians who had fled the Idi Amin regime.

"One always hoped she was alive. The family are obviously upset," Mrs Sparrow said. "Even though she has been missing for more than 14 years, it is like being told she has just died. She was a decent girl who put other people before herself all the time." She said that

Mr Soma, a businessman from Tokyo, had met her sister while studying English in London. He had given a ring to her before he returned to Japan. He later returned to England on holiday and stayed at the Unicorn Hotel. After the holiday he went back to Japan.

Mr Soma's brother-in-law, David Kelly, from Marwick, near Yeovil, said that Mr Soma was "a very deep gentleman". He had not been in touch with the family since 1978.

Det Supt Stone said that a necklace and ring had been found near Miss Bostan's remains, which were discovered by a family walking on the Mendips Hills at Priddy, Somerset, last Wednesday. Police discovered a skull, a rib and some small bones with part of a skirt, a pair of black high-heeled shoes and a handbag.

Dental impressions were checked against missing persons' files, including those compiled after the disappearance of Suzy Lampugh, the London estate agent. Det Supt Stone said he was satisfied after studying the records and items found around the remains that they were those of Miss Bostan. Forensic scientists are still trying to provide positive identification.

Det Supt Stone said that Miss Bostan's death was being treated as murder, although no evidence of injuries had yet been found. Miss Bostan's disappearance

in 1978 led to a lengthy investigation. Det Supt Stone said yesterday: "The investigation did not come to a proper conclusion largely because her body was never recovered. It is our intention to continue the investigation in order to try and resolve it this time."

There was a "strong possibility" of detectives flying to Japan to interview Mr Soma and others, he said. "We believe he is in Japan but we do not know yet exactly where. We will be trying to trace him. We hope to interview him again and every other person involved in the year-long investigation."

Two officers travelled to Japan immediately after Miss Bostan's disappearance to interview Mr Soma, and returned home after three weeks. The investigation was scaled down as no clues could be found to Miss Bostan's whereabouts.

The enquiry revealed that Mr Soma, an engineer then in his mid 20s, had been "besotted" with Miss Bostan. He had bombarded her with red roses and tapes of love poems.

Miss Bostan was a part-time model, who once appeared in the BBC1 television series *Summerline* Special, with Sacha Distel, the French singer. During the filming she was said to have become friendly with one of the show's stars, but police interviews with cast members failed to produce any new evidence.



Japanese link: Asha Bostan, 22, last seen alive with her fiancé from Tokyo

Dismissal of career mother 'unfair'

A WOMAN who was sacked after she parked in an executive's space won her unfair dismissal claim yesterday. But the tribunal said that Sohella Kimberley, 41, an advertising manager, was 30 per cent to blame for her dismissal from Teesdale Publishing in London in October last year. The amount of compensation will be decided later.

James Croom-Johnson, the tribunal chairman, said Mrs Kimberley was not given enough warnings about her personal conduct and her time keeping, which was also an issue.

Mrs Kimberley, 41, of Church Close, Whetstone, north London, who earned £17,000 and drove a convertible Ford XR3 company car, had said she was told by her employers that she had "an attitude problem" when she insisted on driving her two young daughters to school. She told Ebury Bridge Industrial Tribunal, in Chelsea, that she never got to work later than 10am and had an agreement to make up time at evenings and weekends.

The company produces magazines including *Motorsport*. Mrs Kimberley admitted using the parking space of David Williams, the magazine's editor, but said it was only after she arrived earlier than him after a warning about her time keeping. Mrs Kimberley also said she was driven out because William, her husband, a former deputy editor for one of the group publications, left to join a competitor. After the hearing she said: "I'm very glad it's all over."

The company has 28 days to reach an agreement on compensation.

Topless woman in court

A young woman stunned Cardiff Crown Court yesterday when she burst into a crowded courtroom wearing nothing but a culotte-type skirt, allegedly in protest at the arrest of her boyfriend.

Mr Recorder Patrick Harrington was hearing an assault trial in front of a jury. WPC Caroline Hopkins quickly tackled the topless woman, wrapped her uniform jacket around her, and marched her off with two policemen. A woman from Rhondda, Mid Glamorgan, was in custody last night being questioned about public order offences.

Cheque hoax

A cheque for \$20,000 (£10,416) to the Youth Hostels Association has been returned, marked "account closed". The donation was made last week by an American guest at the City of London hotel. The association said: "There was some scepticism about such a large donation. We decided to give the donor the benefit of the doubt. It is a shame that this one turned out to be a hoax."

Jail 'prize'

Steve Wassell, 33, a businessman, from Henley-in-Arden, Warwickshire, paid £300 at a charity auction to spend a day at Armley prison, Leeds. The visit, donated to the auction by the governor, has been attacked by prison reformers as barbaric and as exposing inmates to voyeurism. The auction, at Harewood House, near Leeds, raised more than £46,000 for a children's unit at St James's hospital, Leeds.

Protest at mint

Police were called to the Irish Mint yesterday when striking workers staged a sit-down protest as security lorries arrived at the Central Bank's currency centre, at Sandyford, in Dublin, to collect money. Eleven assistants were suspended last week in a dispute over work practices. Talks aimed at settling the dispute are expected to take place at the Labour Relations Commission today.

Jurors told to avoid moral issue

By LIN JENKINS

A JURY was yesterday warned not to let its views on the morality of politicians' private lives or the muckraking of newspapers influence them in the case of the man accused of stealing the document which disclosed details of Paddy Ashdown's sexual relationship with his former secretary.

Judge Michael Coombe, summing up at the Central Criminal Court in the case of Simon Berkowitz, said the political and topical background to the case had to be put aside. He warned the jury "not to use this trial in any sense or form as a vehicle to express a view on the morality of politicians and newspapers or the lack of morality, of either. This is not the place to resolve that argument which has become topical recently with another politician."

Mr Berkowitz, 45, of Hove, Sussex, denies stealing the document and £223.63 in January this year from the offices of Mr Ashdown's solicitors Bates, Wells and Braithwaite, in the City. He denies a further charge of handling stolen property.

Neil Bullock, defending, said Mr Berkowitz, and the *News of the World* thought they had a spicy and meaty story in the details contained in Mr Ashdown's solicitor's memorandum about the Liberal Democrat leader's affair with Patricia Howard.

"Clearly the *News of the World* felt it could run a salacious scandal in their style in the run-up to a general election." However, he added that the theft of the document had been, in the solicitor's own words, a million-to-one chance. What had been presented as a "story of greed, opportunism and political muckraking" was also, he said, "a story of inside knowledge, cunning and careful planning. A story of a meticulous set-up."

The jury will retire today to consider its verdict.

Last travellers quit Hampshire sites

By LOUISE HIDALGO

HAMPSHIRE was yesterday counting the cost as the last of more than 3,000 travellers who gathered at two sites near Winchester at the weekend were moved off.

More than 500 police officers from five counties were involved in the 12-hour operation, first to prevent the travellers settling and then to evict them from the two main illegal encampments that they set up near Romsey and Overbourne. The Police Federation estimated policing costs at more than £500,000.

County engineers were yesterday trawling through wreckage caused after a council-owned incinerator plant at Overbourne was set alight and vandalised. Damage was estimated at £1 million. Earl Ferrers, who is involved in the Home Office review of the law regarding mass trespass, visited Hampshire yesterday to discuss the events with the county police and local MPs.

At Romsey more than 250 officers began evicting travellers at the smaller site. About 40 vehicles seemed to leave quietly after travellers were given two hours to leave by uniformed police handing

out eviction notices. In Overbourne police had served eviction notices on more than 2,000 travellers the previous evening. By 2pm all that remained were about 10 vehicles leaving, blocked by a broken-down bus.

The High Court has ordered a hunt for two missing children whose mother is believed to have been with the travellers at Overbourne. Leslie Hopkins, of Norwich, has not seen his daughter Jenny, 9, and son Gareth, 6, since he handed them to Christina Cudjiglas, their mother, for a routine access visit on July 26.

Mary Pearce, solicitor for Mr Hopkins, said: "They are travelling in a single-decker black bus which has a white roof, stripes along the sides and the word 'Manana' painted over the destination board." The children have been away in the bus in the past on the understanding that their mother keeps in contact with their father.

Reporting restrictions have been lifted and Judge Hyam, sitting at Norwich, appealed for anyone who has seen the children to come forward.



Murder victim: Tracy Carey, 20, had her throat cut as her 17-month-old daughter, Kayleigh, slept. A 35-year-old man was being questioned last night in connection with the murder. Police in Trowbridge, Wiltshire, believe Miss Carey had been lying for more than 12 hours before her body was discovered on Sunday at the foot of a staircase by her father, Derek. She had died as a result of a frenzied knife attack.

Woman 'kidnapped' by spurned lover

A MAN kidnapped his ex-girlfriend and tried to inject her with an aphrodisiac, St Albans Crown Court was told yesterday. Martin Rolfe, 47, put on a wig and dark glasses to abduct Maureen Armsby, 45, and carry her off in his car. It is alleged.

Mr Rolfe tried to ram a syringe into Mrs Armsby's throat and then the palm of her hand, it was claimed. Peter Caton, prosecuting,

said Mr Rolfe next took out a medicine bottle of liquid and tried to persuade Mrs Armsby to drink it. Mr Rolfe believed that the syringe and bottle contained an aphrodisiac, Mr Caton said.

Mr Rolfe then made her write a letter cancelling a complaint to the police about him, the jury was told. After handing him the letter, she was released, Mr Caton said. Mr Rolfe, of Broxbourne,

Hertfordshire, denies making a threat to kill Mrs Armsby and common assault against her on March 13 this year. He also pleads not guilty to kidnapping her on April 7 and common assault on that day.

Mr Caton said that Mrs Armsby had ended their relationship early this year. On March 11, Mr Rolfe and his wife went to Mrs Armsby's home to ask her to take him

back but she refused, Mr Caton said. Two days later, Mrs Armsby heard a moan outside her house. It was Mr Rolfe and he told her he could not live without her. Once in the house, Mr Caton alleged, he punched her, knocking her out.

Mrs Armsby, of Hertford, complained to the police and Mr Rolfe was ordered to keep away from her. The case continues.

Hospital manager resigns

By TIM JONES

A SENIOR manager at Guy's Hospital, London, who has been exposed as having a conviction for impersonating a doctor, resigned yesterday.

Hospital administrators have begun an enquiry into how they came to appoint the Roy Grimshaw, who was jailed for six years in 1983. He is said to have carried out more than two dozen operations, despite having no medical qualifications.

Yesterday a man claiming to be Mr Grimshaw telephoned Sky television and said he had made no mention of his criminal past because he thought his offences were "spent" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. Sky said the man denied falsifying references he gave when applying for the job, which he has held since last month.

Marion McCrindle, the personnel manager at Guy's, said: "References are always taken up, normally in writing, and provide an added but not critical element."

Mr Grimshaw previously worked at Chase Farm Hospital in Enfield, north London. Chase Farm confirmed that he worked there for about six weeks as business manager for medical services. "He left because he got a better job at Guy's. We had no complaints about him," a spokeswoman said.

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Seychelles sun spurned for Sheffield

By JOE JOSEPH

GIVEN a choice between a £1,500 holiday in the Seychelles, which involves lying under the sun, skipping in the sand and swilling the local cane sugar rum, and unlimited access to Sheffield for the next few years, which involves a measure of masochism, it is not hard to guess which many people would choose.

Yorkshire is so obviously the choice that it took Michael Crookes barely two shakes of a palm tree to spurn his employers' offer of a trip to the Indian Ocean in favour of a season ticket to Sheffield United until the next century. Sunshine in the Seychelles fell into Mr Crookes' lap when Severn Trent Water wanted to reward him for 40

years' service. Most people might struggle to imagine the Seychelles and Sheffield sharing much beyond a capital S and the right to elect their own mayors. But they shared a platform, briefly, for the 55-year-old Mr Crookes.

In the end, however, he found the idea of flying all that way across the world just to enjoy himself too exotic. He prefers the 12-mile trip to Sheffield United's ground at Bramall Lane and a quiet life, which, the way United play, can sometimes be the same thing.

"I've never been one for holidays," Mr Crookes said yesterday. "I've never been away. I prefer to stay at home and watch the football or the cricket on television. I really enjoy my work, so I'm not bothered about time off."

Mr Crookes, from Bamford in Der-

byshire, has been a Blades fan for the past 50 years, though that alone cannot account for his unpredictable decision-making. A general maintenance worker at Severn Trent's Bamford water treatment works, he has measured out his life in football matches and treated water.

For the first home game of the season, when United play Wimbledon, his bosses want the Blades manager, Dave Bassett, to present Mr Crookes with his multiple season ticket before kick-off.

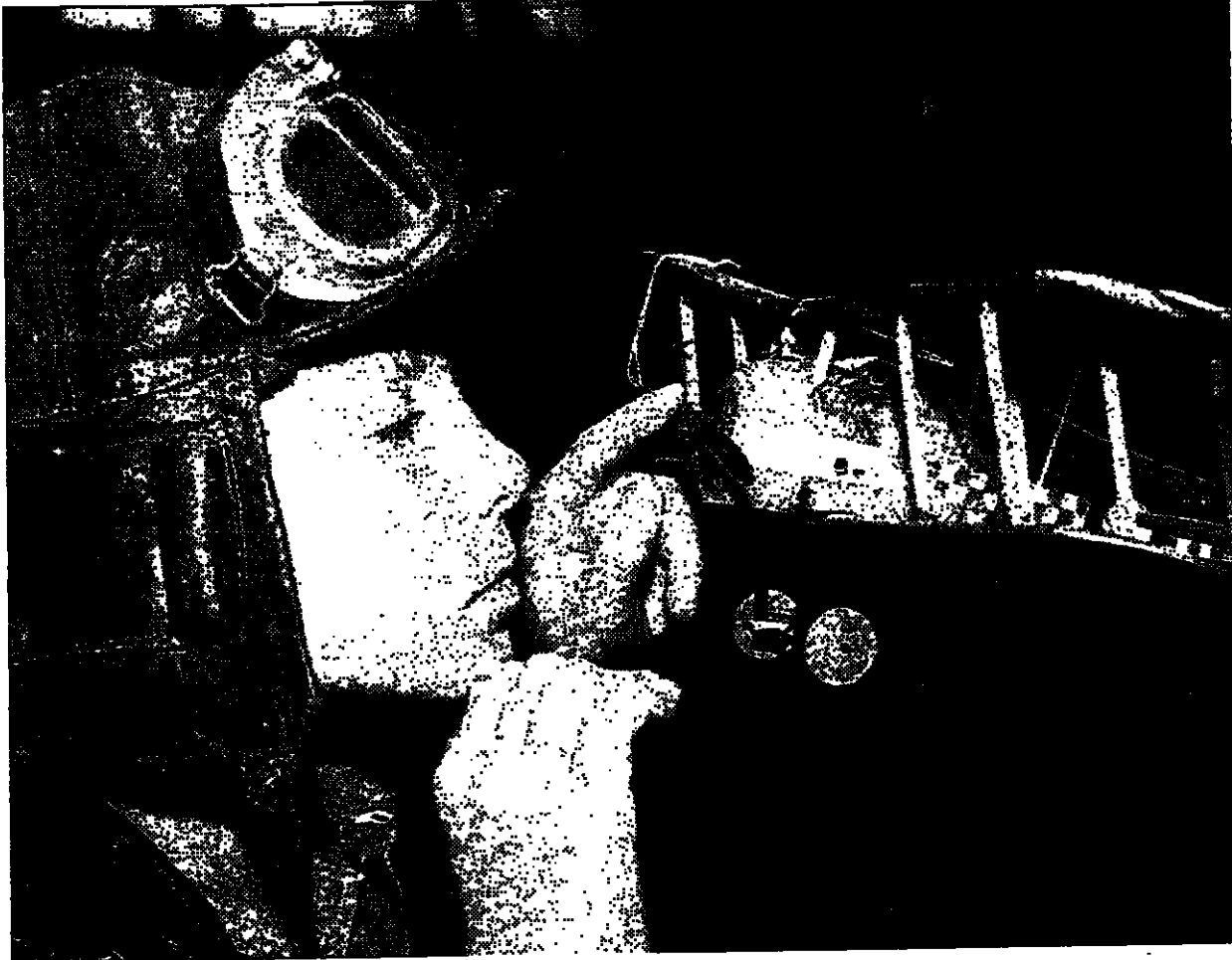
The club's secretary, David Capper, said: "We'd like to thank Mr Crookes for his long and dedicated support and we're delighted he chose to use his long service award in this way." The Seychelles' loss is Sheffield's gain.

Young Biggles dreams of early sorties

FLYING enthusiast Biggles Bristol, 8, from Ely, Cambridgeshire, was given a preview yesterday of a model biplane, one of hundreds going under the hammer at Christie's in London later this week at an auction of air transport memorabilia. The model was a Sopwith 7 F.I. (Snipe), as flown by "A" flight of 56 Squadron, from Biggin Hill, in Kent, from May 1923 to September the following year.

The auction covers a range of aircraft, engines and aviation art from the Battle of Britain to the space age. One of the highlights is a wooden replica of the first vertical take-off aircraft. It is the only true-scale replica in existence of the Bachem Be 349 "Natter" (Viper), an example of which is on display in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington.

The aircraft was produced under the control of the Nazis towards the end of second world war as a semi-suicidal ram fighter in a desperate attempt to arrest heavy Allied bombing raids over Germany. At least 30 aircraft of its kind were launched but were never used in combat because the Third Reich collapsed.



Reach for the sky: Biggles Bristol inspecting a model Sopwith Snipe at a Christie's auction preview

Repossessed houses should be let to the homeless, says study

MORTGAGE lenders have 68,490 repossessed homes standing empty and awaiting sale, most of which could be used to house homeless families. And experts believe that there are another 40,000 homes not yet on lenders' books which have been abandoned by owners unable to meet their payments.

Steve Wilcox, joint author of the most recent authoritative report on repossessions, says bar some very expensive property that would be unsuitable for housing low-income families, the majority of this stock could be let on short-term leases.

The extra 100,000-odd homes that could come into use this way would be on top of the 764,000 homes standing empty in Britain for other reasons. The housing charity Empty Homes Agency calls it an insult to the country's 145,800 homeless people.

Lenders challenge the assumption that most of these houses could be used. Mark Bolcat, director-general of the Council of Mortgage Lend-

Rachel Kelly finds mortgage lenders have thousands of repossessed houses vacant in the third of a series on empty properties

ers, says that many are in a state of disrepair or not in areas of housing need. But lenders admit to delays in reselling repossessions. In most cases they can claim mortgage indemnity payments from insurance companies only once repossessed homes have been sold.

Mr Wilcox, senior research associate at the centre for housing management at the University of Wales and co-author of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's report on mortgage arrears last month, concedes that many houses are in poor condition. But he says letting them through housing associations or councils would benefit both lenders and taxpayers.

"Some of these homes have been empty for quite a while," he says. "They have been stripped right out." He says there would be a cost involved in doing up the houses and a public cost of paying housing benefit to the tenants, but it would still be cheaper than bed and breakfast bills run up by councils and housing associations, which average £15,500 per family per year.

It would also mean that lenders would get some income back from the property, and the presence of a tenant would save the house from further deterioration. "Everybody wins," says Mr Wilcox.

The effect of such schemes could be far greater than the mortgage-rescue package announced by the government before Christmas. Mr Wilcox believes. Leasing schemes were endorsed by the government before the Christmas rescue package was constructed, but were criticised at the time on the grounds that they would not directly prevent repossessions. It has since been acknowledged that the government's own package has done little to avert repossessions or to stimulate the market.

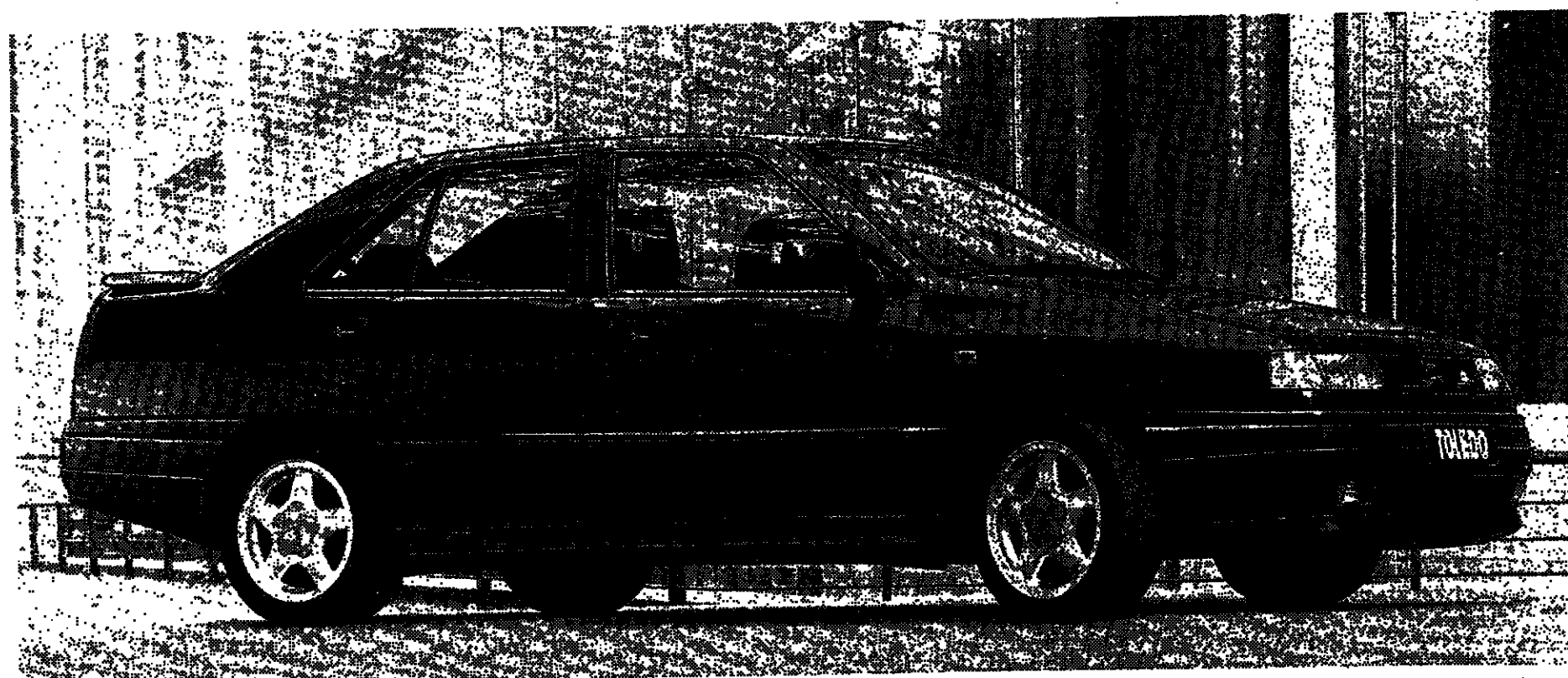
Some lenders, such as Nationwide, have already begun leasing repossessed houses. A spokesman said: "It is too early to say how many such properties we will be able to rent out. We have got a few schemes going and we are talking to other councils around the country."

A spokeswoman for the Council of Mortgage Lenders said that not all people who had been repossessed had become homeless. According to figures from the environment department, of the 38,460 households accepted as homeless in the first quarter of 1992, only 10 per cent of them were because of mortgage arrears.

The government is to invest £635 million in housing associations in London and the home counties to provide 12,000 new homes for rent and sale to those on low incomes. There are 44,600 families in temporary accommodation in London at the moment, a sharp increase from 28,500 families last year.

Janet Daley, page 10

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*Total amount payable includes £25 Document Fee, payable with first monthly instalment.



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Family given a new lease on life

SOUTH Kesteven District Council, Lincolnshire, has been rehousing people made homeless through repossession in properties that its records show have been empty for between 12 and 18 months.

Harry Thomas, from the council, said: "We thought that it would make sense for the lenders to let us use these empty homes in the short term."

The council contacted all the local lenders outlining its plan. The Nationwide was the first to respond and provided the empty properties, the rent for which is paid by the tenant to the building society via a local estate agent. The council provided the tenants, who are paying their rent with the help of housing benefit.

Len and Debra Cook say they are delighted with their new home in Grantham, which has a bathroom with whirl bath. "We couldn't believe our luck," Mrs Cook said. The couple had been on South Kesteven council's housing list for more than four years. The property was taken over by the Nationwide because the buyers could not keep up with their mortgage.

The couple and their three children lived previously in a rented two-bedroom house in Grantham that they claimed was damp, in a poor state of repair and had a bathroom in the cellar with dangerous steps.

Mr Cook paid £50 a week rent for the house, where they lived for over five years, and snapped up the offer of the repossessed home when it

was offered to them. "It is the answer to our prayers but there is a problem because the building society still has it on the market for an asking price of £36,950," Mr Cook said.

"People come round to look at it and if someone decides to buy it we will have to move out. It is like having a dark cloud hanging over us. I would like the council to buy it and rent it to us because it suits us down to the ground."

The couple pay £60 a week rent for the house, equivalent to the basic repayment on a £30,000 mortgage at present rates. They moved in five weeks ago and have already started work on the property.

Mr Cook said: "The deal worked out between the council and the building society is definitely a good idea. It benefits people like us who can't get a house. It also means that the property isn't standing empty and deteriorating. This one was broken into twice."



Cook: delighted with family's new home

Debt weighs down 500,000 families

BY NICHOLAS WATT

MORE than 500,000 households are grappling with debts they cannot pay and only 14 per cent receive expert financial advice that could help them to recover, a report says today. The news comes as figures showed yesterday that consumers were concentrating on paying off debt rather than shopping.

In today's report the National Consumer Council says that 308,000 households are six months or more in arrears with their debts and record numbers, many unemployed, can no longer afford to pay their mortgages. The council accuses the government of providing minimal help and calls on the trade and industry department to take the lead in providing advice centres. Citizens' Advice Bureaux, funded mainly by local councils, are the principal source of help.

Ruth Evans, the council's

director, says: "The government may need to impose a statutory levy on the credit industry or maybe they should promise to match, pound for pound, voluntary contributions from the private sector. There may also be scope for considering a funding scheme linked to debt recovery."

Last night the trade and industry department said that a statutory levy on the credit industry would be "bureaucratic", and would be more difficult to administer than a voluntary one. The government was not prepared to match funds from the finance industry for advice centres.

The Council of Mortgage Lenders insisted that lack of money, not lack of advice, was the main problem.

Leading article, page 11
New credit, page 15

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THE TIMES TUESDAY AUGUST 11 1992

Greenpeace attacks 'legal' pollution of British waters

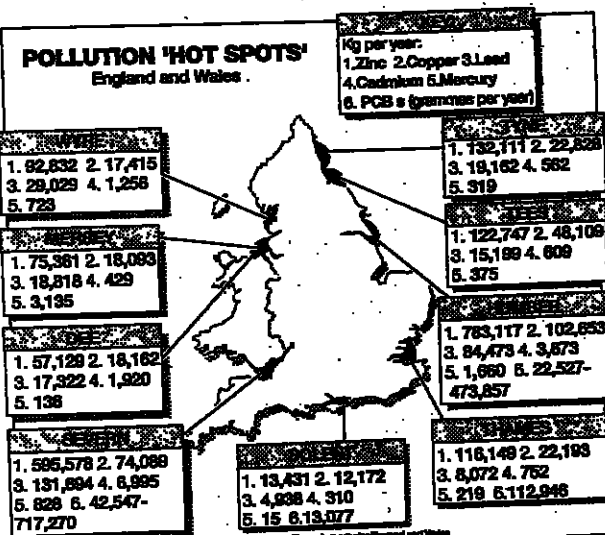
By JOHN YOUNG

BRITAIN has become the largest source of pollution in the northeast Atlantic, Greenpeace says in a report published today.

The environmental group's report calls for an end to the "legal pollution" of Britain's rivers and surrounding seas. The pollution is the result of the system whereby companies can obtain consents to discharge from the National Rivers Authority, it says.

The latest government data show that, nearly 20 years after signing the Paris convention on eliminating marine pollution, Britain continues to pour effluent from about 12,000 "legal" discharge points. More than 5,000 tonnes of toxic pollutants are poured into the sea every year.

A report by the NRA, to be released at next month's ministerial meeting of the Paris commission, which was established after the convention in 1974, identifies nine pollution "hot spots" in England and Wales. They are the Solent and the estuaries of the



Hooligans force vicar to alter his timetable

Parishioners are too frightened to attend a church's evensong services on dark evenings in Llanelli, says Tim Jones

A VICAR in Llanelli, Dyfed, which has been labelled a modern-day Sodom and Gomorrah, is bringing his evening services forward two hours because his parishioners are afraid to go out after dark.

Canon Anthony Williams, the vicar of All Saints' church, said: "The streets of Llanelli are no place for people of any age, let alone the elderly on dark winter evenings. This is a terrible reflection of the times in which we are living."

Two years ago, another churchman, who compared the town with the biblical wicked cities, blamed "moral decline" for lawlessness in Llanelli. On that occasion, the handbag of a BBC reporter sent there was stolen while she interviewed young people.

Canon Williams said parishioners preferred to attend evensong in the afternoon than risk walking to church on dark winter evenings. "In the summer we get good congregations for evening services, where many elderly people attend, but fewer people come in the winter because they are scared of troublemakers."

He said one woman's handbag was snatched from her on her way to evensong. On another occasion, burning paper was pushed under the door of the church during a service.

"Recently our evensong was interrupted by someone firing an airgun through the window," he said. "The police are so overworked that they can't contain the problem. It is a sad indictment of our times."

Supt Alan Jones said: "Llanelli is no worse than any other town of similar size in England and Wales. The chances of an elderly person being attacked are one in 12,000 and only one person over the age of 60 has been robbed since January."

Improved training urged for child care

By KERRY GILL

THE officials who decide the future of children who may need care in Scotland should have more training and a basic qualification for entry, according to a study commissioned by Ian Lang, the Scottish secretary.

The service offered by reporters to children's panels needs improvement, the study says. It calls for clarification of reporters' accountability, more training by councils for reporters and a basic qualification for entry into the service. The study also recommends that



Lang commissioned study into reporters

reporters should provide an annual report and that the reporter in each authority should be given the status of a chief officer while retaining an independent position.

The study is the first time that the post of the reporter to children's panels has been examined since its creation in 1968. The reporter is a key figure in the children's hearings system. As the system has become established, the reporter's role has grown in dealing with children who are alleged to have committed offences or who are believed to be in need of care.

He or she is the official to whom all referrals must be made regarding children considered to need compulsory measures of care.

The role of the reporter came under public scrutiny after the case in which nine Orkney children and police after allegations of sexual abuse. The children were returned to their homes after Sheriff David Kelbie launched an attack on the way the local children's panel and social workers handled the affair. Sheriff Kelbie said that the procedures adopted by the panel and Gordon Sloan, its reporter, had been so flawed as to be incompetent.

Organic farmer leads the way

Helen Browning is returning to traditional farming — and making a profit in the process, writes Michael Hornsby

THERE are few farmers today who can claim to be happy and successful. But Helen Browning, who farms 1,350 downland acres at Bishopstone, Wiltshire, qualifies for both adjectives. She saw the way things were going several years ago and resolved to make her own plans rather than wait for others to make the choices.

Armed with a degree in agriculture, she took over the farm from her father in 1986, aged 26. "My father was a good farmer but quite an intensive one and did his fair share of ripping out hedges," she said. "A lot of 25-acre fields were enlarged to 50 acres, unnecessarily in my view, but everyone was doing it at the time." She is now getting grants to restore hedgerows her father was paid to take out.

Ms Browning and her husband Henry Stoye are tenants of the Church Commissioners. She inherited her farm free of debt and, unlike many farmers, her father had not recklessly over-borrowed during good times. That helped her when she converted to organic farming soon after taking over, a decision prompted as much by business considerations as by concern about the impact of intensive farming on the countryside and animal welfare. Six years later, she has no regrets. Indeed, she feels vindicated by the latest reforms of the common agricultural policy.

"The old system was geared to intensive farming. The subsidy was built into the guaranteed price, so the more a farmer could squeeze out of his acres, the bigger the subsidy he got. Now Brussels is switching to acreage payments, which are unrelated to the amount you grow. So things are at last moving in the direction we were already going."

The farm had always been a mixed enterprise, a prerequisite for organic farming, which uses crop rotation and animal manure to maintain soil fertility and control pests and disease. The farm has 260 Friesian dairy cows. About 180 calves not needed as dairy herd replacements are raised each year as beef cattle. A flock of 700 ewes produce 900 lambs a year. Since taking over from her father, Ms Browning has added 65 rare British saddleback sows, which are kept outdoors in free-range conditions and produce about 1,300 pigs a year.

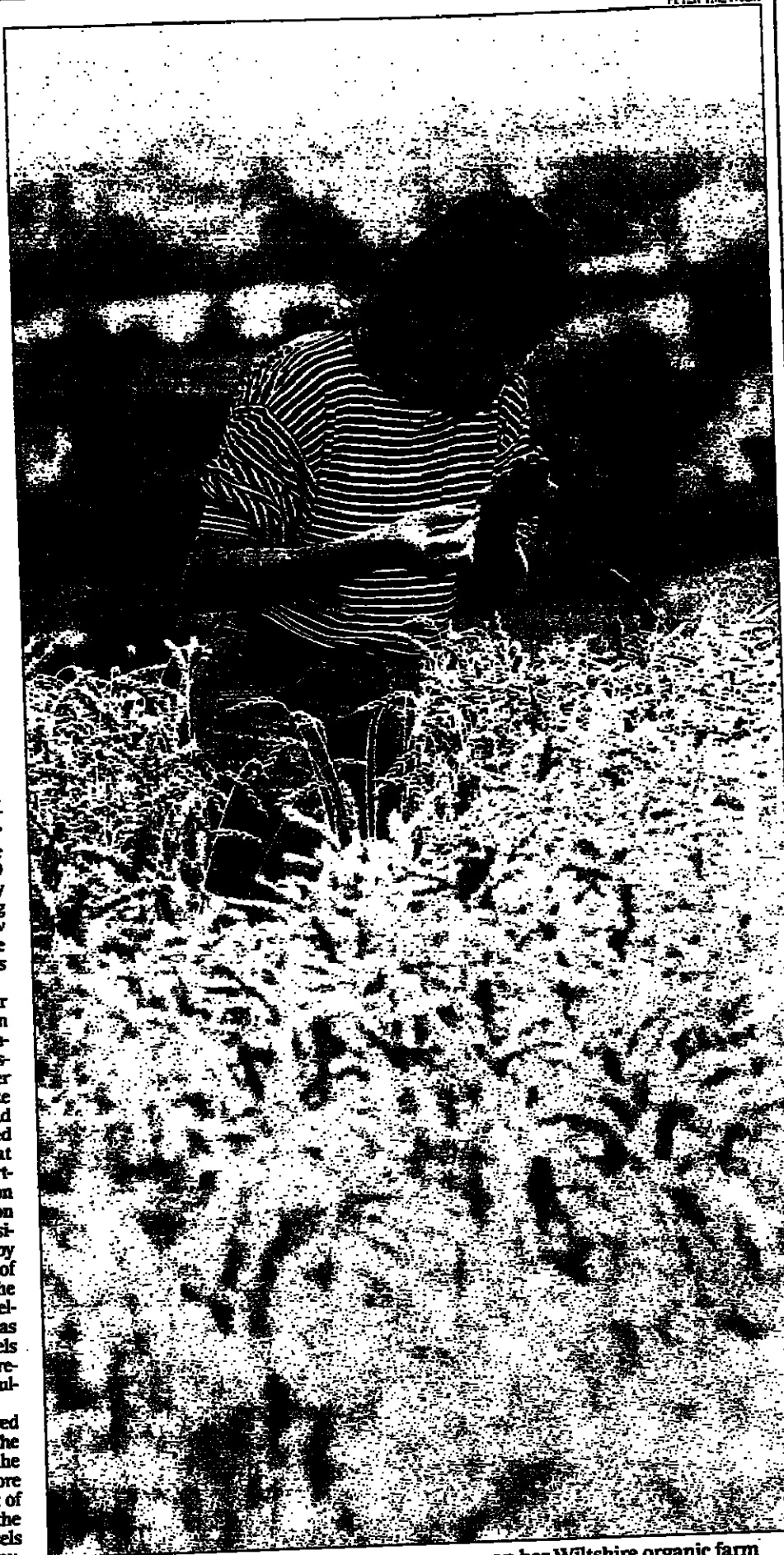
All pasture is now organically managed and the animals feed on clover and home-grown organic grain. The farm is fairly labour-intensive, with ten full-time farmhands, and requires a high level of stockmanship. The pigs, for example, have to be moved to fresh pasture every two months or so to avoid a build-up of parasites and diseases. The use of antibiotics is permitted under organic rules only in extremis. "We have needed to use only one shot of antibiotics in the last eight months, to treat a sow with a bad back."

Ms Browning said that her most important decision had been to do her own retailing. She thinks all farmers will increasingly have to do the same if they are to protect

profit margins. All her lamb, pork, bacon and sausages carry the Soil Association's organic label and are sold by mail order. The butchering and preparation of the meat is done at a shop she opened a year ago in Shrewsbury, just over the border in Oxfordshire. In the next few weeks the bacon-curing and sausage-making are to be transferred to a converted stable block on the farm itself. Ms Browning sees the mail-order business as the financial core of the farm's future.

Of the 700 acres under cereals, mainly wheat and barley, about 200 acres are grown organically. She plans to put about 100 acres of cereals still being conventionally grown into "set aside" this autumn to qualify for the subsidies Brussels is paying to compensate for the 39 per cent cut in cereal support prices that will be phased in over the next three years.

"I plan to use the payments to help meet the costs of converting the remaining conventional acreage to organic methods," she says. Once the whole farm is organic, Ms Browning says she will be free of the dependence on the support price that dogs other farmers. Her organic wheat yields are about a third lower than those of the conventionally grown variety, but she expects to get a price of about £180 a tonne this harvest, compared with about £110 from her conventionally grown wheat.



Hand-picked: Helen Browning tests a crop on her Wiltshire organic farm

Father is jailed for cruelty

A father who fractured 21 bones in his six-week-old son's body was jailed for two years yesterday. St Albans Crown Court was told that the baby was swung by his legs, huddled and squeezed in temper, thrown violently into his cot and his right arm was wrenched back.

Julian Felstead, 30, of Albury, Hertfordshire, told police: "I just cannot believe all the damage I have done to him." Felstead, unemployed, admitted cruelty to his son.

A former handyman and gardener at a children's home, Felstead had shown patience and care with the youngsters in council charge. But he told officers that he could not cope with looking after the baby and lost his temper on several occasions.

Police hunt gay man for killing

Detectives are hunting a practising homosexual for the killing of a man in Bradford, Yorkshire. Det Supt Andy Brown, who is leading the enquiry, appealed for help from the city's gay community in tracking down the murderer.

The body of Michael Towler, 57, was found in the living room of his home in Horton Bank Top last week. He had been killed in a frenzied knife attack.

Tourist raped

An Italian tourist was raped early yesterday morning within 48 hours of arriving in Britain after befriending a man who offered to show her around London. The woman, 18, met the man in Leicester Square while waiting for her boyfriend to finish work. The man took her to St James's Park, where he threatened and raped her.

Plea to courts

David Blakey, the West Mercia chief constable, urged the courts to take tougher action over assaults on police after 18 of his officers were hurt in weekend violence. A number of people appeared in court at Telford and Hereford on charges of assaulting police and public disorder.

Daltrey threat

The rock singer Roger Daltrey, lead singer of the group The Who, has stepped up security at his fish farm at Iwerne Minster, near Blandford Forum, Dorset, after bomb threats from animal rights activists.

Ski speed trap

Beach patrols in Torbay are to use police-style radar guns to stop waterskiers speeding near crowded beaches. Offenders face a fine of £400.

Blighted village awaits the first Texaco removal vans

By PETER VICTOR

THE "man from Texaco" will arrive in Rhoscowther, Dyfed, next week to follow up the company's offer to buy the entire village. For some, his arrival will signal a new start for others, the death of a community. Most of the 101 residents want to take the offer. They have wanted to leave since an explosion in January 10 shook their houses.

Texaco sent letters to the residents last month saying that it would relocate homeowners "in the spirit of being a good neighbour". On the face of it, the deal looks good. Texaco will buy residents' houses at an agreed market value and pay relocation costs. Arrangements are still being made for council tenants, some of whom want to remain together.

Guy Caren, a consultant surveyor, is acting for Texaco in the buy-out. On his way to Rhoscowther, he will see some of the most beautiful countryside in Wales. But he will have to follow the signs for Texaco: there are none for the village until you are almost there.

The refinery is an ugly wound in the landscape. Chimneys thrust into the clouds, the plant belches clouds of water vapour and there is a pungent smell of burning. Tall trees are dying from the top down.

Judith Jones, 35, cannot

wait for Mr Caren to start work. She, her husband Robin, and their three young sons went house-hunting last week. "The news of the offer was amazing," she said. "I just want to go now. After the explosion happened I just thought that it could happen again."

Peter Prynn, landlord of the Crowther Inn, has taken a leading role in campaigning to be moved out of the village. "Texaco is offering like for like on the open market," Mr Prynn said. "They say they're being good neighbours. They can gift-wrap it how they like. We just have to sort out the financial arrangements and make sure they're not too tight-fisted."

For others, the issue is not so clear-cut. There have been endless meetings in the community hall and six families are refusing to move. Their view is summed up by Albert

Powell, 76, a council tenant. "I came here in 1937," he said. "My wife and I have lived in this house for 42 years and we've been very happy. Suddenly in 1964 they started building this Texaco thing and it's just gradually got out of control."

"They're breaking up a village. The people who say they're worried about the danger should have left on January 11 if they are that worried. You could just as easily go out on the roads and be killed. I don't want money. I'd rather have my simple life."

Many householders fall somewhere between the two views. Doug Evans, 54, and his wife Sheila, 47, have spent the past 11 years refurbishing their home. "It is heart-breaking," he said. "I bought this house to retire in. Part of me says no, but another part says we've got to leave because this will become a ghost village."



Keen to go: Judith Jones with her son Jonathan

Exports of whisky to EC soar

By KERRY GILL

SCOTLAND's best known product, whisky, seems to have become the Europeans' antidote to the recession. Figures released yesterday by the Scotch Whisky Association show that exports of the "golden draught" have risen to record levels.

During the first half of this year, 20 million more bottles of Scotch were sold overseas, compared with the same period last year. Shipments were worth £870.7 million compared with £779.5 million last year, an increase of nearly 12 per cent.

Although the United States is the biggest single foreign market, the European Community is by far the most valuable, accounting for 40 per cent of all exports. The French, Italians and the Spanish head the league table of Scotch drinkers in Europe. The association says Scotch is now the fashionable drink for young continentalists. Tony Tucker, the association's director of public affairs, said the UK market had been affected by the price rises caused by the past three budgets.

James Brunner, chairman of the association, said: "At a time when recession is affecting many countries around the world, it is very encouraging to see that the industry is continuing to significantly increase sales."

£24m council error blamed on lawyer

By DOUGLAS BROOM

A LAWYER'S mistake left Camden council facing an unexpected £24 million bill for the repayment of a loan a year earlier than expected, according to the report of an enquiry commissioned by the council.

The error over the repayment date led to council rents being raised by 26 per cent last Christmas. Because the loan was taken out to pay for new housing the council was prevented from increasing the poll tax to cover the loss.

Andrew Arden, QC, who carried out the investigation, said the money had been borrowed in 1986 as part of a £100 million scheme to allow Camden to continue building council homes in spite of new government spending restrictions. After problems raising the full amount, the council decided early in 1988 to repay £24 million of the loan over five years instead of the ten years originally specified.

Tony Watts, a member of Camden's legal department who has since left the council, signed the revised repayment documents but failed to appreciate that the five-year period would run from the date of the original deal in 1986. As a result the council had not put aside reserves to meet the bill for £24.2 million when it was presented by the French Banque Paribas last July.

Mr Arden's report also criticised the council's former chief executive, Frank Nickson,

now retired, for the way in which he handled complaints by opposition councillors about the deal. His deputy, David Riddle, who is now chief executive of Welwyn Hatfield council in Hertfordshire, was criticised for failing to ensure that councillors were kept informed.

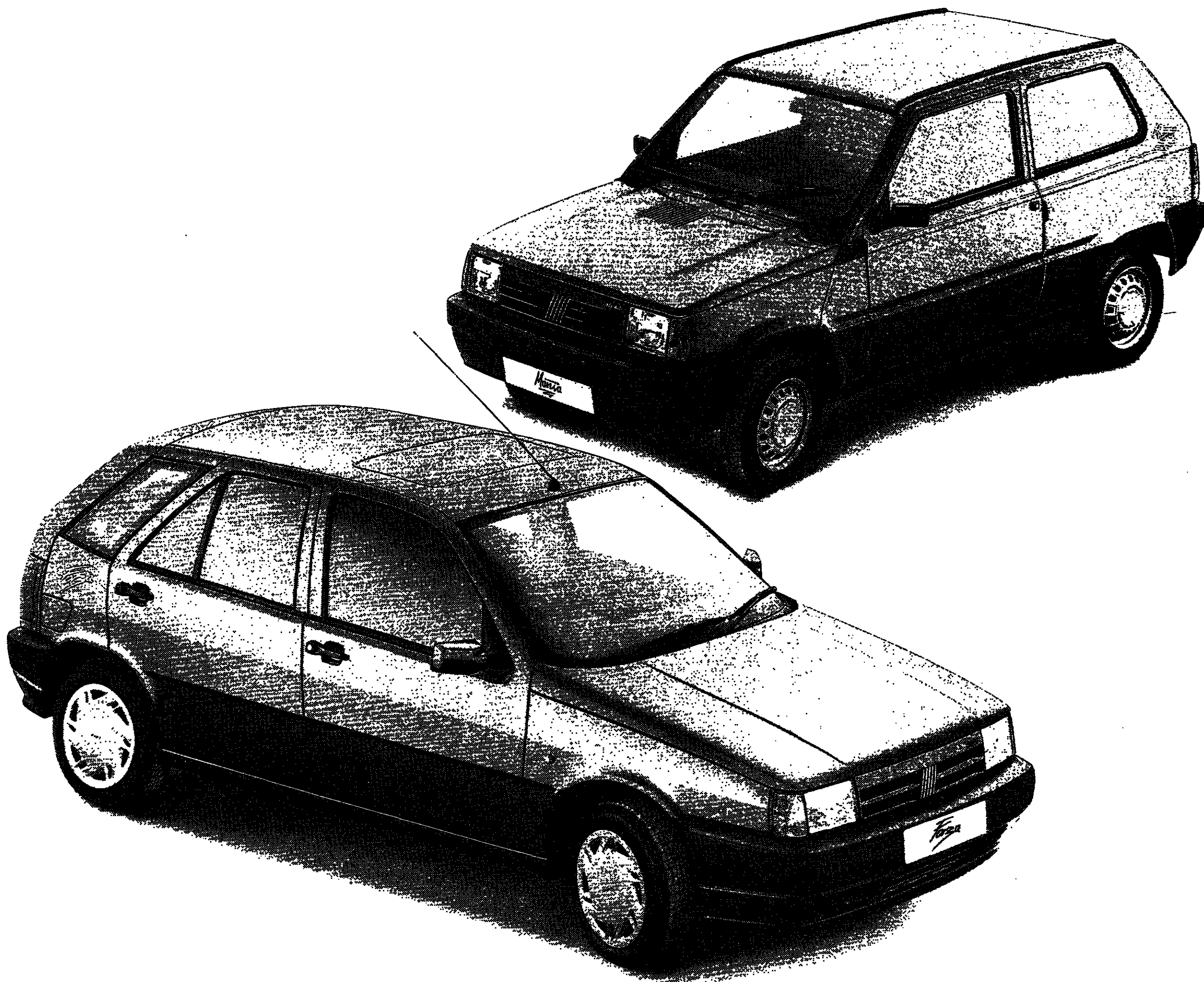
Herbert Robinson, a legal officer, was censured for his response to a request from the finance department for advice on the legality of altering the loan deal, which involved paying a higher rate of interest.

Mike Freeland, now assistant director of finance, was criticised for failing to make sure that a special fund was set up to repay the loan and for failing to keep councillors informed of developments.

Mr Arden concluded: "Standards of decision-making at Camden council have, at least on occasions, been as low as those of any other authority of which I have experience. To find that one confronts a bill of £24 million in one financial year that is not expected until the next is, quite simply, an unacceptable low standard of public financial management."

Julie Fitzgerald, the council leader, blamed government attempts to control the council's budget. However, she said the council accepted the report and its recommendations would be implemented.

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Search for Saddam's missile capability

UN tight-lipped as arms hunt goes on

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

SECURITY shrouded the delicate mission of United Nations weapons inspectors in Iraq for a second day yesterday as they continued their hunt for missing details of President Saddam Hussein's arms programmes.

The latest team has been determinedly tight-lipped over which sites it is visiting, apparently in an effort to reduce the chance of the media magnifying possible incidents, because the threat of a military showdown between Iraq and the West has loomed over their work. Baghdad last week insisted that government buildings would be off-limits to the inspectors who insist that UN ceasefire resolutions permit them to search anywhere.

The latest team is trying to determine the extent of Iraq's remaining ballistic missile capability, but also includes nuclear, chemical and biological weapons experts. The task now facing the weapons inspectors is greater than ever, according to David Kay, who heads the London-based Uranium Institute that promotes the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Dr Kay led three inspections of nuclear sites in Iraq, one of which developed into a tense stand-off in a

Baghdad car park last September.

The most obvious sites that were already known to the West or easily located by aerial surveillance and satellites have long been located and destroyed, Dr Kay said in a telephone interview. But documentary evidence is much harder to find. Most has probably been copied on to microfilm or hidden in the homes of officials where attempts to gain access could rapidly escalate into a diplomatic incident. "Last September we had hard information, including addresses, that there were documents we wanted in the houses of two members of the Iraqi Atomic Energy Agency. But we didn't want to start raiding people's houses," Dr Kay said.

Another problem facing all weapons teams is "sorting the wheat from the chaff" as a huge amount of information floods in from a variety of sources, some of it carefully planted by Iraqi intelligence. Opposition groups provide valuable tip-offs, but many of these are based on second or third-hand sources or are mere rumours.

"A suspicious building can become a missile factory or a

simple ditch becomes a supergun by the time the information reaches the UN experts," Dr Kay said. Wrong information wasted time but disinformation was dangerous.

Dr Kay recalled an incident last year when his team was passed "hot information" by people purporting to be disidents that suspicious nuclear-related material had been buried in a Baghdad graveyard. The informant reported that graves were being dug up at night and material spirited away. "Luckily, we found out in time this was information coming from Iraqi intelligence," Dr Kay said. The aim was to project the UN inspectors as godless provocateurs willing to stop at nothing in their quest to undermine Iraq's sovereignty and self-respect.

The most valuable sources of information are what Dr Kay calls "some very brave Iraqis who risk their lives to key out information."



The conqueror: Cecil Rhodes, whose occupation of Matabeleland led to the death of Major Wilson

Zimbabwe to honour black heroes at a colonial shrine

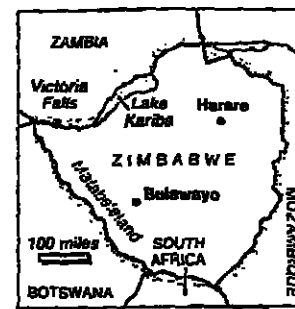
FROM MICHAEL HARTNACK IN LUPANE, ZIMBABWE

DUMISO Dabengwa, Zimbabwe's home affairs minister, and several hundred fellow veterans of Vice-President Joshua Nkomo's Zipra forces are to meet here today for a celebration of Zimbabwe's Heroes' day.

A bullet-pocked cairn, used for target practice by Zipra guerrillas during the 1972-80 Rhodesian bush war, marks the spot where Major Allan Wilson and 55 white troopers made their last stand against the impis of King Lobengula of the Ndebele after Cecil Rhodes's occupation of Matabeleland in December 1893. Some 300 Ndebele warriors are thought to have died in the battle, 100 miles north of the royal kraal at Bulawayo.

Wilson, regarded as a national hero during pre-1980 white rule in Rhodesia, was cut off from retreat or reinforcements when the Shangani river came down in flood during his rash attempt to capture the fugitive king. White settlers put up a memorial further upstream in tribute to the courage of their Ndebele opponents.

Mr Dabengwa, Zipra's intelligence supremo in the Rhodesian war and Matabe-



past heroes. A note of farce crept into last year's solemnities at the national shrine outside Harare when a drunk, bemoaning his poverty, began heckling Mr Mugabe. "Those heroes you are talking about died for nothing. Smith was better than you are," he shouted.

While the people of Matabeleland publicly honour their warrior ancestors today, their private thoughts are likely to dwell on the more recent tragedy of 1982-87, when Amnesty International estimated that several thousand suspected government opponents perished at the hands of Mr Mugabe's North Korean-trained Fifth Brigade. Mr Dabengwa was himself detained for four years on suspicion of plotting a coup.

Churchmen say they hope Matabeleland's political wounds will be healed rather than reopened, but historians see scant prospect of a repeat of the chivalrous legend which now enfoldes Wilson's battle with the Ndebele. "Induna" (General) Mbejane reportedly said over the corpses of Wilson's column: "They were men of men, and their fathers were men before them."

South Africa fights 'water apartheid'

FROM MICHAEL HAMLYN IN JOHANNESBURG

HUNDREDS of thousands of rural South Africans will be forced to leave their homes and trek in search of food and water unless it rains within three months. But not in Johannesburg.

In the leafy northern suburbs of South Africa's biggest city, water hisses from sprinklers on to gardens where daisies, roses, primulas, even camellias and, just now, daffodils flourish. Birds from the parched veld pack urban gardens where trees shelter them and pools and ponds supply precious moisture.

But in the Venda and Lebowa black homelands in the Transvaal's far north, pathetic queues of people form every four or five days when a government or military water tanker arrives. Five gallons a family is the allowance, which often works out at about a pint a day for each person.

All across the north and in the bleak Karoo the situation grows desperate as boreholes dry up and springs cease to produce water. There is a frantic hunt for new supplies, and water engineers from Britain and Germany are being flown in to help.

Unless they succeed, or unless it rains, refugees from the drought may number 2.5 million to three million, according to Len Abrams, director of a newly established consultative forum on drought relief. The refugees will join the birds in flocking to the urban centres, where there is already a profound fear of black migrants squatting in the genteel suburbs.

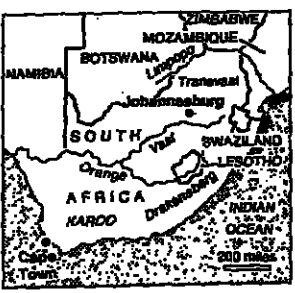
The contrast between town and country, the abundant flow of water through domes-

tic sprinklers in the Johannesburg region and, more importantly, the assured supply of water to an increasingly thirsty industry, is a measure of the success of water engineering in the past. It is also a product of the emphasis given to supplying industry rather than agriculture.

South Africa's main water supply is the Orange river, which rises in the mountains of Lesotho and flows into the Atlantic along the Namibian border. Now plans are in hand for a huge scheme to store the water before it leaves the mountains. The first phase of the Lesotho scheme will cost 5.8 billion rands (£1.13 billion) and will come into operation in 1995.

At present nearly 110 million cubic feet of water are captured and used in South Africa each year. The total run off of water is 175 million cubic feet, which means that more than half is already used.

"Demand is growing at an alarming rate," Piet Pretorius, acting chief engineer of the water department, said. "The increase in living standards, the increase in population, cause a sharply rising curve. We expect all our fresh water reserves to be depleted by the year 2010."



Mrs Verwoerd moves into all-white refuge

Bessie Verwoerd, 91, the widow of Hendrik Verwoerd, the architect of apartheid, has taken up residence in the remote, whites-only village of Orania in the Northern Cape.

The village was bought from the government by the Afrikaner Volkstaat movement last year and the 500 Coloureds who once lived and worked in what was a construction camp were moved out. Now all the manual labour — clearing away the rubbish, sweeping the streets and other menial tasks — is done by whites.

Most of the 350 residents turned out to welcome "the mother of the volk". Women wore traditional Voortrekker costumes and Mrs Verwoerd matched them in a long grey dress and bonnet she wore for the 150th anniversary of the Great Trek in 1988.

An Elvis Presley fan, Gayle Bellomy, 49, of Dayton, Ohio, left the dentist's office with her hero on her crown. Ms Bellomy said she went in to have a permanent crown placed on a tooth, and Dr

Daniel Collins handed her a mirror when he had finished. "I could see these bold letters printed on the cap, and by golly, it spelled out Elvis," she said.

President Fidel Ramos of the Philippines has dumped Peter Garrucho, his chief aide, in a surprise reshuffle that marked the first rupture in his six-week-old administration. He named Congressman Edel-miro Amante to replace Mr Garrucho, who had publicly embarrassed him by issuing a presidential order without authority.

Jim Bolger, the prime minister of New Zealand, has refused to apologise for calling Joan Kirner, Australia's Victoria state premier, "the fat lady" at the weekend. He said she was fat and agreed that he too was overweight, adding he did not want to make an international incident of it. He said the remark was "a good throwaway line" and he was surprised at Australian sensitivity.

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Republicans strive to silence Bush critics at party convention

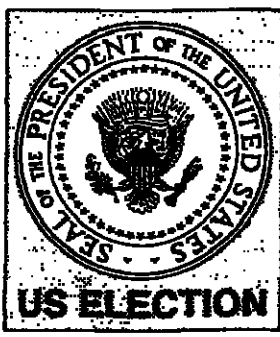
FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

REPUBLICANS began work in Houston yesterday on a draft manifesto for next week's convention that makes virtues of necessities and contains the seeds for further internal division.

The manifesto reaffirms the Republican commitment to a constitutional amendment banning abortion, a position opposed by an increasingly vocal section of the party. It glosses over President Bush's reversal of his "no new taxes" pledge, saying this year's choice is between a candidate "who vetoes tax increases and one who proposes them". It puts the best light on the dismal economy by saying it is "poised for stronger growth".

Convention organisers are striving to prevent the event becoming what *The New York Times* called "a televised examination of President Bush's campaign problems", with leading Republicans reportedly being told not to detract from upbeat moments by giving television interviews, vice-president Dan Quayle being kept largely out of sight and dissenters' placards barred from the Astrodome.

But after three presidential elections in which the Republi-



cans have made their Democratic opponents look like amateurs, traditional roles have been reversed in 1992. It is the Democrats who are running the tough, sharp, mean campaign, the Republicans who are messing up and on the defensive and whingeing about opposition tactics.

"They're like the schoolyard bully," retorted James Carville, Mr Clinton's top strategist. "Now that we're hitting back, they're acting like it's not fair."

Mr Carville, known as the "Ragin' Cajun" from Louisiana, perhaps comes closest to inheriting the mantle of Lee Atwater, the streetwise, power-hungry Republican guerrilla who masterminded the ruth-

less destruction of Michael Dukakis in 1988. Mr Atwater subsequently died of a brain tumour and the Bush campaign is now headed by "country club Republicans" such as Robert Mosbacher, the chairman, Robert Teeter, the pollster, and Fred Malek, the manager.

The Republicans' only top campaign aide with the common touch and an eye for the jugular is Mary Matalin, the political director who also happens to be Mr Carville's girlfriend. But when Ms Matalin raised Mr Clinton's problems with "bimbos" last week she was, to her disgust, rebuffed by Mr Bush.

From his "war room" in Little Rock, Arkansas, Mr Carville directs a formidable operation whose primary purpose is to prevent the Bush campaign from re-defining Mr Clinton in the way it did Mr Dukakis. So far it is working. Between the 1988 Democratic and Republican conventions Mr Bush cut Michael Dukakis's 17-point lead in half, but this year Mr Clinton remains more than 20 points ahead and a new poll yesterday showed him leading by 14 points even in Texas, the president's electorally vital adopted state.

The groundwork was laid months ago. The painful lessons of the Dukakis campaign, whose *modus operandi* was to turn the other cheek, were minutely analysed. Responses were prepared for every conceivable Republican line of attack. Throughout each night aides now digest the evening news and wire reports to predict and outflank the Republicans' tactics. They trawl space with a satellite dish to monitor network feeds to affiliated stations. They have "watchers" throughout the country to monitor local news reports and opposition appearances. They positively race to respond to every attack, knowing attacks can only be effectively rebutted within the same news cycle.

When Mr Quayle charged last week that Mr Clinton's politics would put two million out of work, the Clinton camp quickly responded that America had lost 82,000 private sector jobs during Mr Bush's presidency but Arkansas, under Mr Clinton's leadership, had created 85,000.

When the White House wheeled out Carroll Campbell, South Carolina's governor, to denounce Mr Clinton as the archetypal "tax-and-spend Liberal", Clinton aides swiftly published a 1989 letter in which the South Carolina governor had praised Mr Clinton as a "good friend" who "is not one of those liberals. He is not a radical".

But it is direct Republican attacks on Mr Clinton's past and character that the Democrats fear most, and they are seeking to pre-empt those by invoking the slashing negativism of the Republicans' 1988 campaign at every turn. Let that fails, they have dropped heavy hints that they will dredge up Mr Bush's own alleged extramarital affairs.

The steely Clinton campaign, tempered by fire during the primary season, even elicits a grudging admiration from senior Republicans. They are "terrific tacticians", admits Newt Gingrich, the Republican House whip and himself a mean campaigner. "I think they'll dance as close to the presidency as anyone could with that product."



Out of space: Michel Tognini, a French cosmonaut, talking to journalists yesterday after his Russian space craft, Soyuz TM 14, touched down in Zhezkazgan, Kazakhstan. He returned to Earth with two Russian cosmonauts, Aleksandr Viktorenko and Aleksandr Kalery, after completing a series of scientific experiments inside their Mir orbital space

station. They had taken off on July 27. Two other Russian cosmonauts, Anatoli Solovoy and Sergei Avdeyev, are to remain on board the Mir space station until late January to conclude a series of medical experiments and pack the equipment to be taken back to Earth. Cosmonauts Viktorenko and Kalery had been in space since March

17. M Tognini's "Antares mission" was intended to revive the former Soviet space programme and boost France's cosmic image. It was the third joint Russian-French flight since 1982, and the first in a long-term co-operation agreement that envisions three more joint projects between now and 1996. (AP)

Sandinistas reject reform of police

FROM DAVID ADAMS IN MIAMI

PLANS by President Chamorro of Nicaragua to dismiss senior officers from the Sandinista-controlled national police have led to a new confrontation between the two-year-old government and the country's former revolutionary regime.

The police reform plan has been forced on a reluctant Mrs Chamorro by the Bush administration, which has frozen \$104 million (£55 million) in vital aid in anger over the Nicaraguan government's ties to the Sandinistas, who ruled the country for 11 years and continue to hold key levers of power.

The aid was frozen in June after intense lobbying by conservative Republicans on the Senate foreign relations committee. A committee report claimed that Sandinista military officers had abused a tacit power-sharing agreement with Mrs Chamorro to send weapons to left-wing guerrilla groups in Central America.

When Mrs Chamorro visited Washington earlier this month she was told by American officials that, as a condition for restoring the aid, she must begin to wrest control of the army and police from the Sandinistas. But that may be easier said than done and threatens to upset a delicate political balance in a nation still trying to come to terms with a legacy of decades of dictatorship, international isolation and civil war.

Mrs Chamorro is not only confronted with the problem of maintaining an uneasy alliance with the Sandinistas; she is increasingly being challenged by leading members of the United National Opposition coalition which brought her to power. Virgilio Godoy, the vice-president, Alfredo Cesar, president of the national assembly, and Arnoldo Aleman, the mayor of Managua, have all demanded that she end what they call "co-



government" with the Sandinistas. They claim that the police have failed to keep order and have refused on several occasions to evict Sandinista squatters from disputed lands and houses.

The most divisive issue in the country is property. Powerful right-wing critics of Mrs Chamorro, some closely associated with the Somoza family which ruled Nicaragua by dictatorship for much of this century, are demanding a property law to restore houses and farms which were confiscated by the state after the Sandinista revolution of 1979.

Key figures in the Chamorro government are implicated in a corruption scandal over accusations that \$1 million in aid donations for the poor were skimmed off to buy votes in the national assembly to defeat a conservative property bill earlier this year.

Sandinista leaders and labour unions reacted strongly to the purge at the weekend, accusing Mrs Chamorro of a "servile attitude to the gringos." Daniel Ortega, the former Sandinista president, accused the United States of "sowing the seeds of instability and brewing violence in this country."

But the Sandinistas may prefer to hold their fire in recognition that President Chamorro has for two years tried to head off right-wing political and property interests.

Emperor's China trip approved

FROM REUTERS IN TOKYO

THE Japanese government has decided to override opposition from right-wing politicians and go ahead with a controversial state visit to China by Emperor Akihito this year, sources in the ruling Liberal Democratic Party said.

Emperor Akihito's visit, the first by a Japanese monarch, will mark 20 years of diplomatic relations between Peking and Tokyo. Kiichi Miyazawa, the prime minister, formally asked by the LDP to make the final decision on the imperial visit, was to notify the party's executive board of his approval at a meeting last night. He had delayed the decision because of opposition from within the LDP.

An official announcement of the visit will come later this month, the Japanese news agency Kyodo, said. The trip will be for about six days and start on October 22, the news agency added.

A key moment of the emperor's stay in Peking will be his formal words of apology for Japan's invasion of China between 1931 and 1945, when the imperial army overran much of its heartland, killing 20 million people.

Activists tell Indian carpet makers to end child labour

A new campaign will tell the West to boycott carpets from South Asia, Christopher Thomas writes

FOUR young Indian slaves are home with their parents today after more than two years in captivity. They were liberated from a dingy hut in the heart of the northern Indian "carpet belt" where they worked and slept at a handloom under a master called Jagdish, who beat and half-starved them.

Bonded labour is common in India, particularly in the carpet industry. Human rights groups estimate that there are 200,000 bonded child weavers in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh, where carpet manufacture is centred. The four tribal children were freed by the Bonded Labour Liberation Front, a leading human rights group, which escorted them home to their tribe in the neighbouring state of Bihar.

Jagdish spent a night in prison and was then released on bail. He has been charged under the Bonded Labour Abolition Act, a potentially powerful law that is rarely implemented. Sugan Ram, 10, one of the slave boys, said Jagdish fed them twice a day with a handful of rice and frequently beat them for not working hard enough. They never received wages.

The boys spent their first day of freedom at an ashram in the village of Tbrahimpur

run for Dalits (untouchables) and tribals by Kallash Satyarthi, a Brahmin human rights worker. They received new clothes, a square meal and a bath.

The children were sold into bondage by their impoverished parents for 500 rupees (£10) each. The middleman who conducted the transaction promised that the boys would be well paid and properly fed. They were taken nearly 150 miles to the village of Lohara, where Jagdish makes high quality handmade carpets under contract to an export company.

Repeated attempts by parents to bring their sons home failed. Vasubeh Oraon, a Bihar farmworker who is paid in vegetables, raised 40 rupees for the bus and train journey from his slum hut in southern Bihar to try to free Daharu, his 14-year-old son. But he was thrown out by Jagdish's musclemen. It took him three days to walk and hitch-hike

home. Going to the police is a waste of time for somebody as low in the social hierarchy as a tribal or Dalit.

Most bonded child workers are Dalits or tribals. Large numbers of Muslim children are also bonded. Police, who are in league with loom masters, are loath to enforce the law. High-caste politicians have no interest in reforming the system.

"If 20 people like Jagdish were prosecuted and sent to jail, bonded child labour would be wiped out overnight," Rama Shankar Chaurasi, a social activist in the Uttar Pradesh carpet belt, claimed.

Fifty welfare groups in Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan and India have formed an organisation called the South Asian Coalition for Child Servitude, with the aim of fighting child bonded labour in the carpet industry. It is the first grassroots regional attempt to eradicate the use of child slaves.

Mr Satyarthi, the group's chairman, said in Delhi that carpet companies in India were being given a deadline of September 18 to pledge not to use bonded child labour. If they failed to comply, importers in the West would be urged to boycott handmade carpets from South Asia.

UN team considers division of Somalia

Nairobi: A United Nations mission assessing security arrangements for famine relief going to millions of starving Somalis is examining proposals to carve their war-torn nation into four separate zones (Jonathan Clayton writes).

UN sources said the mission discussed the plan at the weekend during meetings with southern warlords in Kisumu, the country's second port. The 22-strong mission also examined the possible deployment of military observers in the southwest region on Somalia's border with Kenya, one of the most dangerous in the country.

"The famine in some of the more remote inland areas is worse than anywhere else," said a Somali representative of the Somali Peace and Reconciliation Organisation, one of the few broad-based bodies left in a nation now riven by inter-clan hatreds. Hundreds of people die daily in what has been labelled the worst humanitarian crisis in the world. Somalia plunged into anarchy after Mohamed Siad Barre, the former dictator, was overthrown in January 1991 by rebels who then fell out among themselves.

Investors upset

Shenzhen: Thousands of angry investors took to the streets of this southern Chinese city, setting fire to one police car and overturning another to protest over alleged corruption in the sale of share application forms, witnesses said. (Reuters)

Sikh revenge

Amritsar: Sikh militants killed 31 relatives of policemen in four villages in the Indian state of Punjab in revenge for the shooting by police on Sunday of terrorist Sukhdev Singh, chief of the Babbar Khalsa International militant group. (Reuters)

Facts reviewed

Cincinnati: Three judges of the appeal court here are to consider whether newly uncovered evidence helpful to John Demjanjuk, the convicted Nazi war criminal, should have stopped them from permitting his extradition to Israel in 1986. (Reuters)

Embassies cut

Sydney: Australia is closing its Lisbon, Bern and Prague embassies and downgrading four of its six American consulates to pay for its push into Asia. The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported. The Geneva embassy will not be affected. (Reuters)

Bishop freed

Hong Kong: China has released Li Side, an elderly Catholic bishop, amid signs of a thaw in its attitude to priests who refuse to disown the Vatican. Bishop Li's release followed that of three other elderly Catholics in May. (Reuters)

Mourners riot

Colombo: A crowd of more than 100,000 mourners broke down cemetery walls and shouted anti-government slogans at the funeral of Lieutenant-General Denzil Kobekaduwa, who was killed in a Tamil land-mine attack last Saturday.

Killer hanged

Damascus: A man found guilty of murder and armed robbery was hanged in public in the southeast Syrian town of as-Suwayda. *Tishrin*, the official newspaper, reported. Wa'il Fares Azz, 37, was the fifth person to be hanged in Syria this year. (AFP)

Bow bowed out

Islamabad: The Pakistani parliament is abolishing the Western practice of bowing, which it has used for 45 years. Instead the Speaker will pronounce the Islamic greeting "Assalam-o-Alaikum" (peace be on you) at the start and end of proceedings. (AFP)

133 released

Kampala: Uganda has freed the last 133 of about 4,500 political detainees jailed without charge or trial over the past six years, according to Walter Stocker, the representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Uganda. (AP)

Sin unmasked

Abu Dhabi: A Pakistani who wore women's clothing to enable him to meet his lover has been sentenced to four months and 60 lashes for adultery. He was caught when he removed his veil and his married lover's children spotted his moustache. (AFP)

Salad brigade marches to defend health food fad

NEW YORK NOTEBOOK by Ben Macintyre

American health food shops were once places where earnest young men with beards and women with tie-dyed ponchos could browse peacefully among the alfalfa sprouts and chat over herbal tea. No more. Health food suppliers and practitioners of alternative medicine have recently found themselves at the forefront of a government effort to clamp down on unlicensed or unproven medical products.

One day last May the treatment specialists at the Tahoma Clinic in Washington state, a small private hospital specialising in homeopathic medicine, were quietly going about their business (namely injecting sick people with vitamins, minerals and amino acids) when armed agents from the US Food and Drug Administration clad in bullet-proof vests burst in and demanded

that everyone freeze. Since most of the clients were already suffering from a number of disabling ailments, that demand was not strictly necessary.

The agents confiscated quantities of what they called "vitamin-mineral concoctions" which they said were being injected without government approval. No charges have been brought, but the raid followed others on various health food shops in Texas resulting in the confiscation of Vitamin C, aloe vera, herbal tea and other, more exotic remedies. The raids are part of an attempt by the FDA to control the manufacture and sale of homeopathic products of unproven efficacy, but they have prompted a violent reaction from a wide array of herbalists, acupuncturists, alternative medicine and, inevitably, Hollywood movie stars.



Next Saturday a group of celebrities and health food activists will assemble in Beverly Hills, in the words of the actress Sissy Spacek, "to start screaming at Congress and the White House not to let the FDA take our vitamins away". The whey-faced Ms Spacek may not look as if she gets through a lot of vitamins, but apparently she

finds her work very hard without them.

The FDA, acting under a law requiring manufacturers to provide reliable and scientifically provable nutritional information to consumers, says many alternative therapies have little basis in science. The alternative medicine activists re-

spond that they are effective and popular — and lucrative. The FDA recently proposed that vitamins and minerals should be labelled as drugs over a certain dosage, that the sale of some herbs be restricted and only substantiated medical claims be permitted on "alternative medicines". If accepted, the plan would enable the FDA to impose fines of up to \$250,000 (£130,000) on individuals, and up to \$1 million on companies breaking the rules.

The battle lines have now been drawn between the FDA and the alternative health supporters. Thousands of activists, bursting with good health, attended rallies recently in Los Angeles, Washington and New York and marched under banners proclaiming "Act now, or kiss your vitamins goodbye!"

Hekmatyar guerrillas blast Kabul streets

FROM SUZY PRICE IN KABUL

DISSENTING Afghan guerrillas launched their heaviest rocket bombardment on Kabul yesterday, possibly causing more than 1,000 casualties, according to a defence ministry spokesman.

But he could not say how many among the casualties were killed by the hundreds of rockets he said were fired at the capital by a hardline Mujahiddin group, which is a partner in the three-month-old Islamic government. Diplomats said it was the heaviest pounding of Kabul since the Afghan civil war began 14 years ago. The guerrillas took Kabul in April.

The government said it had repulsed the dawn offensive by the Hezb-i-Islami group of hardline guerrilla leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. "The army has advanced to most of the places from which firing brought great bloodshed to the people of Kabul," Haji

Delili, the defence ministry spokesman, said. Late yesterday there were still sporadic sounds of shells and bursts of gunfire from nervous troops on the streets. Most people stayed indoors, hoping the fighting had died down for the day at least.

Many residential streets were hit and in some areas most houses were damaged or destroyed, witnesses said. Injured people filled one city hospital but there were no doctors. Officials at a hospital run by the International Committee of the Red Cross said they had received 70 casualties by midday yesterday. Many of the rockets also struck Red Cross buildings.

More than 650 rockets fell on Kabul in the first 90 minutes of the assault, which began at first light from positions held by the Hezb-i-Islami to the south of the city, a military expert said. (Reuters)

Obscure Muslim enclave blocks Belgrade's ambitions

THERE is no electricity in Bihac, telephone calls are local only, Sarajevo television reception has been cut off and no supplies have come through for two months. Serbian shells crash down at random on the town every evening.

A familiar story in Bosnia-Herzegovina: but Bihac is different. It is the capital of the only overwhelmingly Muslim part of the country that has not been conquered by the Serbs or subordinated to the will of the Croats. This hitherto obscure part of Bosnia is increasingly taking on a military and political significance that far outweighs its size.

United Nations officials have been saying for weeks that unless the international community takes drastic action over Bosnia, an all-out assault by Serbs on the Bihac area will begin. Once completed, Serb leaders, gorged on "ethnically cleansed" territory, will call an end to fighting and sign the de facto partition of the republic with the Croats.

Tim Judah finds the people of Bihac, who are surrounded by hostile Serbs eager to complete the project of greater Serbia, ready to stand their ground

UN and other Western aid officials exaggerate the gravity of the military situation, but with good reason. A successful Serb assault would drive 300,000 people into exile in what would be the biggest single migration of refugees in Europe since 1945.

To the south the area known as the "Bihac pocket" is bounded by the River Una across which Serb forces daily launch mortar and rocket fire. The rest of the area is surrounded by hostile Serb-held areas of Croatia. These areas have been largely demilitarised by the UN, a factor that has saved the enclave from attack from all sides.

However, as refugees flood out of the Serb-controlled areas of Bosnia, it appears that Serb leaders are divided over the fate of the area known as Cazin Krajina.

While it would certainly rank as Muslim territory in the ill-fated European Community's Bosnian "cantonisation" plan, in the grander scheme of things it would lie as a bitter pocket of resistance in the very heart of greater Serbia.

While Serb leaders resolutely deny that there is a plan for a Serbian state from the Romanian border to the Adriatic, a tell-tale financial detail would seem to confirm suspicions that exactly such an entity is already emerging. The federal and Serbian governments both claim that Yugoslavia now comprises just present day Serbia and Montenegro. Hence the Yugoslav dinar now longer circulates in either the self-proclaimed Serbian republic of Krajina (in Croatia) or the Serbian republic of Bos-



nia-Herzegovina. These "republics", therefore, have their own currencies. However, not only are they set at parity with the Yugoslav dinar but the banknotes of the two territories are identical except for the names of their respective republics and are interchangeable. Even as war rages the

consolidation has begun. A glance at the map therefore reveals that Bihac stands as an unwelcome enclave at the very heart of this emerging creation. While some Serb leaders are believed to want to push for a military solution and the expulsion of its Muslim population others are

believed merely to want to take control of the vital railway line that connects Belgrade with the northern Bosnian stronghold of Banja Luka and Knin, the capital of the Croatian Serb enclave. Unfortunately Bihac straddles this vital economic lifeline.

In an effort to avoid the possible flight of 300,000 people, officials of the UN High Commission for Refugees have begun to press for active involvement in Cazin Krajina. They want an extension of the UN's mandate in Croatia or a Kurdish-style safe haven. But this is not a proposition welcomed by local leaders. "It would mean the recognition of Serbian gains," says Muhammad Osmanagic, the head of local government in one of the area's four counties.

The fear in Bihac, which is low on ammunition but strong in terms of manpower is that any UN protection and a quick end to the war would mean that Bosnian Muslims would be left with only two small parts of the country.

These would be the "Bihac pocket" and a small triangle bounded by the cities of Sarajevo, Tuzla and Zenica.

Such an end to the war would mean that even if Bosnian sovereignty continued to exist on paper the de facto partition of the republic between Serbia and Croatia would be complete. "Serbs have their state in reserve and Croats have theirs. We have nothing else. It is incomprehensible that we should not be allowed ours," said Mr Osmanagic. "We have decided to fight to the end and if Croatia joins the Serbs in trying to partition the state we will fight them too."

The local economy has collapsed but Bihac had the good fortune to be the location not just of Yugoslav strategic food reserves but also the home turf of Agrokomerc, the food processing company. When the Yugoslav army left the area they dynamited Bihac airport. But in the heat of the midday sun there is frantic activity in the village of Coralic as a new airstrip is rolled out. Ostensibly this is to

Delors wants EC to check Serb power

FROM TOM WALKER IN BRUSSELS

JACQUES Delors, president of the European Commission, made one of the boldest speeches of his career yesterday, criticising European Community members for their inaction in Bosnia and calling for military intervention to counter Serbian nationalism.

In going well beyond his brief at an emergency meeting of the European parliament on the Yugoslav refugee problem, M Delors said that only the deployment of a large and well-armed international force would make Belgrade think again. "It seems that without the credible perspective — I underline credible — of a military intervention, nothing will be able to stop the subtle and murderous strategy of the Serbian leaders," he said. "Otherwise I fear that nothing will stop the expansionist madness, the ethnic madness, the murderous madness."

M Delors, whose dream of a federal Europe has been undermined by the Danish referendum on Maastricht and a new wave of anti-EC sentiment in national capitals, used the occasion to call once more for a united Community foreign policy. "It's true that the EC is not sufficiently integrated or strong enough to resist the world recession or to mediate in a tragic and bloody conflict just two hours' flight from Brussels," he said. "We already know it, but we must keep saying it. Only through political union and its twin goals of monetary integration and a common foreign and security policy will we be able to face, with lucidity and courage, our global responsibilities."

He said that if the Community continued to stand by and do nothing about Yugoslavia, "we will be the accomplices of an epidemic ravaging Europe, throwing populations against one another and justifying all forms of racism". While acknowledging that no force

could enter Yugoslavia without UN consent, M Delors suggested that the EC might use the International Peace Conference in London at the end of this month to push the Western European Union into action for the first time.

M Delors has outlined a six-point plan for concerted EC action in Yugoslavia:

- To put all concentration camps, whether run by Serbs, Croats or Muslims, under international control.
- To guarantee the distribution of humanitarian aid in Sarajevo and Gorazde.
- To give aid to the Yugoslav republics accepting refugees.
- To help European countries give temporary homes to refugees, and to fight any apartheid policies of Belgrade.
- To enforce a total embargo against Serbia. "They must understand the determination of democracies not to tolerate the triumph of this monstrous ideology."
- To intensify diplomatic efforts.

An official from the United Nations High Commission for Refugees said at the same meeting that "up to 50 per cent of Bosnia is a detention centre. The picture that remains in Yugoslavia is not only gloomy but desperate."

MEPs at the meeting criticised the British presidency of the EC for not doing enough to pull the EC together over the problems in Bosnia.

● Berlin: Ibrahim Rugova, leader of the majority ethnic Albanians in Kosovo, called for a UN-sponsored military mission in the Serbian province to head off war with the minority Serbs. "They [the UN] should not once again wait until it's too late," Mr Rugova told *Berliner Zeitung* (Reuters).

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Mopping up: a Serb soldier throwing a hand grenade through an open window during fighting yesterday in the town of Konjic in Bosnia

Senior officers reject force

FROM ROBERT SEELY IN ZAGREB

SENIOR military officers, including General Satish Nambiar, leader of the United Nations contingent here, yesterday advised against the increased use of force in the Yugoslav civil war, claiming that more force could jeopardise current UN peace-keeping operations.

Sir Peter Inge, Britain's Chief of the General Staff, who flew to Sarajevo to meet two British UN observers in the city, also questioned the wisdom of raising the military stakes in Bosnia. "It is a very difficult and tense situation. It is not susceptible to quick solutions," he said. Three of

the suburbs were reported shelled by Serbian forces during Sunday. Snipers were also active yesterday throughout the city.

Hine, the Croat news agency, claimed that Gorazde, the beleaguered Bosnian town south of Sarajevo, was hit by 200 shells overnight. Serbian forces also reported heavily pounding the Muslim town of Jajce, killing at least three people.

Despite the continued killing, General Nambiar argued against any change of status for UN troops. He said only their self-restraint had staved off conflict with armed fac-

tions in Croatia. "There had been a number of situations in which provocations were high. If self-restraint had not been exercised, we would have got into conflict," he said.

In the three UN protected areas the general argued, the mandate of his men was being carried out with moderate success. Areas which were battlefields may still be tense, but the overall situation in the areas showed a marked improvement. "In towns and villages which were subjected to shelling, people are now waiting to lead a normal life," the general added.

Need for ground troops revised

BY MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

OFFICIAL contingency plans for protecting United Nations humanitarian land convoys to Bosnia-Herzegovina involve a minimum of 5,000 to 10,000 ground troops.

The modest figures, which contrast starkly with reported unofficial estimates of 100,000 troops, are seen to be practical and realistic to meet the limited political aim of the proposed operation which is to create a protected land route for the supply of aid to the victims of the civil war. With the UN Security Council now expected to pass a resolution tomorrow authorising "all measures necessary" to protect the convoys, immediate decisions will have to be taken on the route of the land convoys and on the countries sending ground troops.

Since President Bush is opposed to having American forces on the ground and has, instead, offered combat aircraft to provide air cover, the pressure will be on John Major to agree to send British troops. France, Holland and Belgium are also expected to contribute troops. Italy could send logistical support and Germany's contribution is likely to be the warships already in the Adriatic.

Several land routes for the convoys are being studied: one

of them to run from Split to Sarajevo, another from Zagreb, both of which would entail long journeys. A third route from Dubrovnik up to Sarajevo is deemed risky because Serbian forces are still in the area around the walled port. The preferred route from Split would involve an uphill and winding journey of about 150 miles.

The contingency plan worked out by the Western European Union, the nine-nation defence organisation, involves the deployment of a battalion of about 800 infantry troops with each convoy, consisting of 20-25 vehicles with additional forces held in reserve. Willem van Eekelen, the secretary-general of the WEU, has proposed that safe havens for refugees from Bosnia should be set up in Croatia first, before the land convoys begin. "The aid could then be driven direct to the safe havens instead of going all the way to Sarajevo (and to other towns under siege)," he said yesterday.

The safe havens would need to be guarded by several thousand troops. Dr van Eekelen said he thought the maximum number of troops required for the land convoys and for the safe havens could be limited to about 10,000.



NEWS IN BRIEF

Sardinia army role queried

Rome: A gun attack on five Alpine soldiers in Sardinia has raised questions about the government's use of the army to restore order in areas of Italy dominated by organised crime (Philip Willan writes). One of the soldiers, Renzo Bertino, 20, a conscript from Montezemolo in northwestern Italy, was seriously wounded in the chest in what military authorities said was a dispute over a local girl.

The soldiers were attacked late on Saturday near the central Sardinian town of Mamoiada by two masked men armed with shotguns. The soldiers are part of a contingent of five thousand men sent to Sardinia at the end of June after the kidnapping of eight-year-old Farouk Kassam, son of a Belgian Arab hotel owner, who was released by his abductors a month ago.

The attack comes as the last of a 7,000-man military force arrives in Sicily to try and wrest control of the island from the mafia after the spectacular assassination of Italy's top two mafia investigators, Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino.

Reporter killed

Istanbul: The death of Hussein Deniz, a freelance Kurdish reporter, brings to eight the number of journalists killed in southeastern Turkey this year. Two men, both expelled from an Islamic theological college, were linked with his killing.

Pay-out sought

Seoul: Women from six Asian nations, including Hong Kong, have met here to urge Tokyo to compensate survivors of the estimated 200,000 women, mostly Koreans, forced into sex slavery by Japan's Imperial Army in the second world war. (Reuters)

Fires rage

Warsaw: Forest fires on the Polish-German border have engulfed 4,940 acres and are threatening the town of Olszyna, forcing the border to be closed. Firemen are trying to stop the flames reaching residential areas. (AFP)

Pickets win

Bangkok: Lada Air of Austria is withdrawing its inflight magazine after pickets at its offices here claimed that a cartoon, depicting a young girl naked above the waist and with the caption "from Thailand with love", promoted sex with children. (Reuters)

Leader dies

Madrid: Manuel Ulloa, 69, a former Peruvian prime minister died in the Madrid clinic where he was being treated for cancer. He was prime minister in the government of President Belaunde Terry from 1980 to 1983. (Reuters)

Strike resumes

Marseilles: Dockers here have begun a further 48-hour strike to protest at a law that cuts jobs and virtually ends the union-run casual labour system. Men at 27 ports have accepted the law. (Reuters)

Crop increases

Moscow: Russia's harvest is expected to exceed last year's by three million tonnes. But the total harvest will fall short of average crop yields during the past five years. (AP)

No single way to untangle the Yugoslav mess

WHEN the Austro-Hungarian monarchy started to annex Bosnia-Herzegovina 114 years ago it sent 100,000 soldiers to the region. That proved insufficient and even after the force was doubled war correspondents reported garrisons under siege and the roads impassable because of Balkan brigands.

The terms of battle have barely changed. True, the West has gained valuable experience in "surgical" air strikes but making war in Bosnia would be a long-term and massive undertaking. No wonder the Western response appears muddled.

Heart-aching pictures of orphaned children and mutilated bodies have mobilised public opinion which demands either quick results from European Community diplomacy or a show of military force. Yet this is a crisis that defies both diplomacy and military intervention for there is no single way to "solve" the disintegration of Yugoslavia. Rather, as in the crumbling Soviet Union, there is a multiple crisis that requires new, untested qual-

The disintegration of Yugoslavia is a multiple crisis that demands new, untested qualities from the West and the Islamic states, Roger Boyes writes

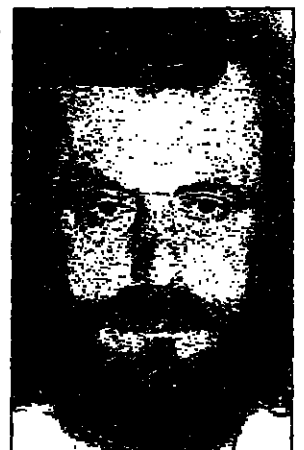
ties from Europe, the United States and the Islamic states. There is a crisis of authority in each individual republic, a series of economic crises, the biggest refugee crisis since the second world war; there are wars and wars in the making. No one action, no one intervention can now untangle the mess.

The flashpoints include:

- A full blown conventional war is under way in Bosnia. It is defined by the territorial ambitions of Serbia and Croatia and comes complete with camps and atrocities and the displacement of over two million people.
- In Croatia, there is a low intensity war. The fighting in Slavonia has eased partly because the Serbo-Croat war has shifted for the time being to Bosnia-Herzegovina. Nonetheless, the Osijek region is far from a safe place;

Serb snipers are claiming several victims a week. The war can intensify at any time.

- In Kosovo there is a war waiting to happen. Ethnic Albanians make up 90 per cent of the province's two million population yet Albanians have been sacked from schools, hospitals and factories and the Serb leadership is squeezing the society harder and harder. For Serbs, Kosovo — the site of their historic defeat by the Turks in 1389 — is almost holy ground. They will not give even a semblance of home rule to the Albanians. Neighbouring Albania is making martial noises.
- In Serbia itself the political opposition is growing, especially in Belgrade. People are starting to talk openly about the post-Milosevic era and various cards — the king, Milan



Draskovic: one of the post-Milosevic choices

Panic, the emigre prime minister, Vuk Draskovic, the opposition leader, the Orthodox church — are being reshuffled. The Serbs could displace their nationalist-communist regime either by a power-sharing deal, or by civil war.

- Macedonia has become virtually ungovernable. Its economy crippled, living in a strange limbo — unrecog-

nised by the EC until it changes its name to satisfy Greece — it is a diplomatic dilemma that could turn nasty.

These flashpoints are all interconnected. The serial wars have to be stopped, switched off or prevented more or less simultaneously. To give extended air protection for the humanitarian relief of Sarajevo would change the military balance between Serbs and Croats.

Croats encouraged by the humiliation of President Milosevic would press for the recapture of the land lost in last year's war. A Serbian army forced to withdraw from Bosnia would certainly radicalise the political climate in the republic, and probably cause the Panic government to fall.

Military intervention cannot therefore be taken in isolation. There has to be a comprehensive diplomatic front involving the Islamic states, the European Community and the United States. All sides have to be very clear on the ultimate goals in Yugoslavia.

Winning votes in Sarajevo

Conor Cruise O'Brien on how Bush will exploit the tragedy in Bosnia

President Bush is dithering. Should he intervene militarily or not, and should the target of intervention be Iraq or Serbia? Last week he edged towards intervention against the Serbs, and was carrying Britain and France with him. But his options are still open. The kind of Security Council resolution he is now looking for provides a blessing in advance for anything tough he may decide to do, without obliging him to act.

The Security Council is a secular institution in appearance only; in reality it is a spiritual one. Its only function is to hand down blessings or curses on particular parties and courses of action. But its blessings and curses, like those of ancient Delphi and the medieval papacy, have power: they affect morale, for good or ill. In particular they affect American morale. Americans believe in the existence of something they call "world opinion", and they like to think that this is on their side, which is why the blessing of the United Nations is so important to them. They had their blessing over Korea and over Desert Storm, both of which operations are regarded as successful. They did not have that blessing over Vietnam, the most cruel failure in American history. So Mr Bush is right to make sure of that blessing in advance for anything he may decide to do in Bosnia. He will have no difficulty in securing a curse upon the Serbs into the bargain.

A blessing is one thing; a decision is another. Mr Bush's decision will be determined by whether he thinks any given course of action (or indeed inaction) will help or hinder his reelection in November. Some of his campaign advisers feel that intervention would hurt his campaign. Their message is: "Quagmire, Vietnam. Keep Out." And that is also the message of his official advisers in the State Department and the Pentagon.

But with his campaign in desperate trouble, the temptation to gamble is high. As November draws nearer and President Bush lags behind Governor Clinton, even in Texas, the voices of caution grow fainter and the dream of being rescued by a spectacular operation in Bosnia becomes more alluring.

A *Newsday* poll at the weekend showed 53 per cent of people in favour of air strikes to relieve the siege of Sarajevo, with only 33 per cent against. This poll, I believe, points the direction in which Mr Bush is likely to move. Note the concentration on Sarajevo. The American television audience, which has to be Mr Bush's prime concern from now until November, thinks of Sarajevo as the problem, because that is where all those horrifying images are coming from. The many other places that journalists cannot get into — and of which consequently there are no such images — do not exist for the television audience, how-

ever awful the things that are happening there. These places do not exist, therefore, for Mr Bush either, in his capacity as presidential candidate. The function of the presidency for the moment is to get George Bush re-elected. And the message of that poll, to a president who is a presidential candidate, is: "Do something about Sarajevo!"

Fortunately for the president (and, quite coincidentally, for the people of Sarajevo), it is for the moment at least easier to do something about Sarajevo — if temporarily — than to do something about Bosnia. Air strikes would be popular, and they are also feasible without such high casualties as would lose President Bush the election.

So, unless the Serbs lift the siege of Sarajevo, such air strikes can be predicted once the Security Council's blessing has been obtained. Whether ground troops will be committed depends upon military

With the president's campaign in desperate trouble, the temptation to gamble on intervention is high

evaluation of the results of the air strikes. If it appears that the Serbian forces have been so weakened by the bombardment that they cannot inflict serious casualties on the Americans, then US ground troops will be sent in. The result (always providing that serious casualties are avoided) would be a television spectacular and a great boost for the Bush campaign. American troops relieve Sarajevo. People of Sarajevo welcome Americans! Mr Bush could outdo Mitterrand by flying to Sarajevo in his capacity as commander in chief to congratulate his victorious troops on their magnificent achievement. If that did not fix Bill Clinton, nothing would. There is, however, a problem about the timing. If the troops went in, say, in September, and stayed to protect Sarajevo, the initial euphoria would have worn off and the bad news would be coming in by election day.

The results of the inevitable action by Serbian guerrillas would be being felt, and the bodybags would be coming home. People would be talking about a second Vietnam and Bush's Bosnian blunder. That would not do.

On the other hand, the nearer the operation gets to election day, the more obvious it will be that Mr Bush is using American troops to fight his personal election campaign. Yet if he is still trailing in October, I think he will gamble by sending in ground troops. If he does, he will pull them out again as soon as possible, declaring their mission accomplished by the escorting of that particular convoy. They will not stay to protect Sarajevo, and the siege will resume.

Nobody is going to try to solve the ethnic conflict in Bosnia by the use of military force, and if they did they would only make it worse for themselves and everybody else. But someone may well have a good try at pretending to have solved it with pictures of the people of Sarajevo welcoming their American liberators.

Janet Daley welcomes the plunge in British house prices and hopes they will continue to drop

Ordinary suburban houses in my part of north London were selling for a quarter of a million pounds not long ago. Now they are officially priced at about two thirds of that amount. If the reality of the market meant anything, they would be worth next to nothing, because they are unsaleable. But property prices have been fantasy for so long that no one seriously suggests that most of the houses in the South-east are worth nothing.

Anyone could have seen this crisis coming just by reading his local property ads: who on earth could afford these prices? Not the salaried middle classes who were once the mainstay of neighbourhoods like mine. Most of the absurdly over-priced houses around London have been bought by businessmen for whom home and business were financially enmeshed. Naturally, when the recession came, suburban property prices collapsed with it. Instead of being the moderately priced backwaters of the professional classes whose incomes were safe if unspecified, suburban houses had become speculators' fodder.

Suggestions for solving the crisis become ever more desperate. One building society last week pro-

posed that owners forced to sell their houses for less than the inflated price to which they were (by some inalienable right) entitled should have their losses made good by the government. This week, the merchant bank Morgan Grenfell will issue a report suggesting that the mortgage tax relief limit should be doubled. Both of these propositions are based on the principle that what you should do when you find yourself in a hole is keep digging.

Of the two suggestions, the first is more naïve and the second more defeatist. Both are (or should be) political non-starters. If the government were to underwrite people's losses, they would be inviting buyers and sellers to collude in massive and unprovable fraud. A offers B a low price for his house on the understanding that B will be able to recoup any loss from a government hand-out. B feels no urgency to look for a better offer and A buys the house he wanted for the lowest feasible price. The taxpayer stumps up the difference

between this agreed bargain and whatever stratospheric mortgage B originally took on.

The government would endlessly be subsidising the inflated prices of the late 1980s and would be locked into maintaining them. Not only is this economic idiocy, but it maintains the socially undesirable situation in which ordinary houses are priced beyond the financial reach of people on middle incomes.

Morgan Grenfell's programme of increasing the tax benefits to those with mortgages (so increasing the incentive to take on as much property debt as one can afford) is a real gospel of despair. Getting rid of tax subsidies to homeowners entirely may seem a remote hope now, but to go backwards by increasing the tax relief limit would be short-termism of criminal proportions. We must stop bribing people to buy houses, especially since homeownership is the last thing that many people need.

There are two factors which

must be faced if we are to see our way through this. One is that for many people (perhaps everyone at certain stages of their lives), home ownership is an unnecessary liability. The other is that much of what is wrong with the British economy stems from its dependency on the property market, which ties up personal savings in moribund ways and militates against workforce mobility.

We already have the most over-regulated, over-rationed, apathy-inducing housing climate in the Western world. Private rental accommodation of a moderately priced, readily accessible kind has been extinguished by socialist paternalism. Council housing has become a feudal monolith, trapping with its fatal promise of "security" whole generations of no-hopers in the unemployment capitals of Britain.

Given this lack of choice, the only option is to buy one's own home, even if that kind of commitment to permanence and stability is quite inappropriate to one's

lifestyle. Many of the people who are indispensable to a dynamic capitalist economy — the young who are unencumbered by family life, the entrepreneur taking risks on the future, the ambitious who want to be socially and geographically mobile — are not proper candidates for the leaden responsibility of a mortgage.

This blindspot about housing was one of Thatcherism's most serious contradictions. Although ostensibly committed to freedom, Thatcherism failed to notice that pushing people into inappropriate property-ownership is the most effective way to limit their personal and economic liberty. The property lobby insists that owning a house is the best encouragement to spend money. People kitting out their suburban palaces with every known consumer durable are what keeps manufacturing industry solvent. (But surely people living in unfurnished flats would also need washing machines and televisions.) In practice, though, inflated house prices have postponed the spending classes and worsened the recession. They must now be allowed to fall freely until housing once again becomes a realistic proportion of people's domestic spending.

Will Los Angeles burn again?

Ben Macintyre warns of the risk to both justice and society in the retrial of four policemen

An entirely unscientific poll conducted yesterday in the Cosmos Diner on 23rd Street revealed the following awareness of judicial issues among a cross-section of New Yorkers: approximately half could recite what was at issue in the trial of William Kennedy Smith; perhaps three-quarters knew the broad details of Mike Tyson's trial. But every single individual thought they understood what had happened when the four white police officers who beat up the black motorist Rodney King were acquitted in April on most state charges: the white guys got away with it.

That was in New York. In California, where that verdict sparked America's worst urban riots this century, the issues of racial bias and unfair acquittal are even more deeply seared on the public consciousness. Those four Los Angeles police officers now face a second trial, on federal charges of violating Rodney King's civil rights when they cudgeled him to the ground with batons on March 3, 1991.

The decision taken by the federal authorities to hold another trial has a dual purpose: to allow justice to be seen to be done and to calm the racial tensions provoked by the case. But in many ways this second trial defies both justice and common sense, and it is likely to have the reverse effect.

The United States Constitution states: "nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life and limb". Since the state and federal governments are each sovereign, they can bring separate charges without violating the Constitution. It is a tool that was used often and to good effect in the South of the 1960s, where the most flagrant, racially-motivated miscarriages of justice were often rectified through the federal courts.

In April, the four officers were acquitted on almost all counts of using "excessive force": federal prosecutors now charge that the officers "did willfully strike with batons, kick and stomp Rodney King", thus violating his constitutional rights under "colour of law". This may not technically be "double jeopardy", but the distinction is lost on most Americans: the officers, it is rightly assumed, are being tried again for beating up Rodney King.

The federal prosecutors are confident that they will find an impartial jury from among the 16 million people who live within the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles Federal Court. But can there be anyone in California who is not aware that 60 people died and \$850 million-worth of damage resulted from the Rodney King verdict? In a television age when the violence associated with such racially-charged cases is beamed live into every home in the country, there is virtually no chance of finding a sufficiently ignorant jury.

While making its decision, the jury will be expected to suppress the knowledge that the lives of many innocent people may rest on the verdict. "No threat of explosion should affect their deliberations," opined *The Washington Post*, demanding of 12 Californians an objectivity that no news organisation nor any other observer has been able to achieve. America is in lynch-mob mood, and the pressure



Burning injustice: the riots which followed the Rodney King acquittals

to convict is overwhelming. In such circumstances, the impulse to avoid riots and deaths may well override the instinct for fair play. If the officers are found guilty, that suspicion will forever linger over the American justice system and

be on the public conscience. By deciding to hold another trial, the federal authorities hope to cool racial conflict, but it is a terrifying gamble. The burden of proof in the federal case is far heavier than in the first trial. Then, prosecutors

had only to prove intent to use excessive force: now they must prove the deliberate intent to deprive Mr King of his civil rights. Rodney King himself will probably be called as a witness, and is unlikely to make a good one. With ill-disposed bias, the American media have pointed out that 75 per cent of such federal prosecutions are successful, and most are already banking on a guilty verdict.

But what if the men are acquitted again? By holding another trial, the stakes have been raised immeasurably. As *The Chicago Tribune* points out: "The state court verdict, still incomprehensible to most Americans... caused damage that would only be compounded by a second, dubious trial of the same events."

By almost any standards, Rodney King appeared to suffer a grievous moral wrong at the hands of the Los Angeles police, and a second when the four policemen were allowed to walk free from a Simi Valley Court. But attempting to rectify that is fraught with danger.

In the middle of the Los Angeles riots, Rodney King appealed for peace. "We will have our day in court," he said. He was referring, it seems, to the damages which the City of Los Angeles will probably pay him as result of his ordeal, not to a virtual rerun of the trial that caused the riots in the first place.

Acquittal of the police officers would unleash a racial fury that neither Rodney King nor anyone else could calm: if they are found guilty, revenge will have been taken; but justice will not have been seen to be done.



...and moreover

CRAIG BROWN

Even as you read this, countless former ministers are putting the finishing touches to their diaries and memoirs of the Thatcher era. Of course, the first to fall from grace have a head start, the publishing timetable for discarded ministers operating strictly on the basis of first out, first in. Sir Norman Fowler and Lord Ridley, Young, Tebbit and Whitehead have already produced theirs, all with titles like "Don't Blame Me", or words to that effect. The next batch will be from Sir Alan Clark, Lords Parkinson, Lawson and Howe, and, of course, from Mrs Thatcher herself. Today, I am delighted to offer a preview of their different accounts of a Downing Street tea party, towards the end of the 1980s.

Cecil Parkinson: "Margaret took me to one side, holding my arm in a gentle caress. Her eyes met mine. 'Cecil,' they seemed to say, 'you are the only one I can trust. I want you — and you alone — to play mum.' So I picked up that teapot with great resolve, and I poured as I had never poured before, basking in her approval. My colleagues there — Alan, Nigel and Geoffrey — looked on with a mixture of envy and admiration. How they would have liked to have been hand-picked by Margaret for such a task! Ever the diplomat and 'communicator', I gave each of them one of my straightforward, open smiles as I handed them their cups, so gaining their deep approval. We then had a round-table dis-

cussion, during which I took the bold, controversial step of expressing my agreement with everything Margaret had said the day before."

Nigel Lawson: "Thatcher gave poor old Parkinson the job of pouring the tea, probably to put him in his place. 'Sugar, Nigel?' she then asked me, adding, 'How many — one, two, three?' It was typical of our exchanges that she should have to consult me over even such simple numerical exercises. Her respect for my intellectual abilities amounted almost to awe. 'Two,' I said, decisively, and I think she recognised a dismissive edge in my voice. For she never had the nerve to ask me that question again, from then on leaving the entire sugar-placing operation up to me and me alone. Having established that the distribution of the sugar-lumps was now my province, I passed them to Alan Clark, who accepted them with the natural grace of a political junior. A group discussion followed, in which I maintained intellectual dominance."

Alan Clark: "After a ghastly little butler with over-greased hair and a twitchy smile had finished pouring our tea, Nigel L. had the sheer effrontery to pass me a hideous little silver bowl full of sugar-lumps. Does he not realise that a gentleman never takes a sugar-lump in his tea? It is just permissible to take sugar, but never by lump, and needless to say Nigel passed the hideous silver bowl from left to right, which is also unutterably common. Meanwhile, I kept my

thoughts to myself, smiling pleasantly, as discretion is my middle name, and quietly finalised by plans for privatisation of the House of Commons. Thank goodness that, unlike the others, I always had the benefit of Margaret's respect. I passed poor Geoffrey H. the biscuits. He is what I would call a deeply bisectuary sort of person. During tea, we discussed future policy. Margaret nodded dismissively while the butler put forward his views, looked sorry for Nigel, and smiled sympathetically while Geoffrey yammered and erred. Oddly enough, only my own views seemed to cut any ice."

Geoffrey Howe: "Over the tea that day, I put forward my views to Margaret in the strongest possible terms. Looking at my diary, I find myself surprised at the harshness of some of the language I used, but I still believe it to have been quite necessary. Uncompromising, radical phrases such as 'in the not too distant future, let's take time to examine the whole range of options available to us' and 'Might I trouble you for a drop more tea?' kept cropping up. By the end of that tea-time discussion, Margaret and the others were left in no doubt of the absolute force with which I held my convictions, if any."

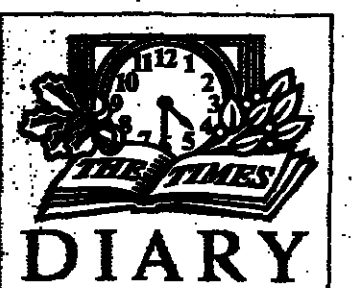
Margaret Thatcher: "That day, I spent the early afternoon in peace and quiet determining government policy for the next few months. I can't remember whether I had anyone around for tea: probably not."

Opera tomorrow

ALTHOUGH the much-publicised and apparently critical independent report on the Royal Opera House by Baroness Warnock is still in draft form, leaks of its contents have set tongues wagging at Covent Garden, where there is increasing speculation about who might replace Jeremy Isaacs, the general director of the Royal Opera House, when his contract expires next year. It is widely rumoured that David Mellor is looking around for a replacement for Isaacs, who left Channel 4 to run the opera house four years ago.

John Drummond, the former controller of Radio 3 and head of music at the BBC, is leading the field. He is well qualified for the post, having run the Edinburgh Festival. He is currently running both the proms and the European Arts Festival. Although in the past he has pooh-poohed suggestions that he might succeed Isaacs, saying that he cannot reconcile £150 tickets with the sort of organisation he would like to run, Drummond is known for his business sense, and is seen as a man who could get his teeth into the £4 million projected accumulated deficit. "I get big audiences in for difficult programmes," he said recently. "I am not someone who turns art into a church."

It may be, however, that Mellor would prefer his own man on the inside, in which case John Willan, who runs the London Philharmonic, would stand a good chance. Willan and his girl friend Judy Grahame are close friends of the minister, who has himself twice been vice-chairman of the LPO. Another strong contender is Nicholas Payne, who is leaving Opera North to take up the role of



artistic director of the Royal Opera, and would thus be the obvious internal candidate. Baroness Datta O'Connell, managing director of the Barbican, is the leading woman in the running. Peter Jonas, director of the English National Opera, who has already accepted the post of general director of the Munich opera house, is an outsider still championed by some wishful-thinking insiders.

Goodbye, sailor

AUTHORITIES in Russia are trying unsuccessfully to restrict the latest wave of emigrants. Relaxation of travel restrictions in the former Soviet Union is producing a crop of would-be international yachtsmen. But rather than encourage their enterprise, the authorities are openly criticising them. The latest, Vasil Gusev, a professional sailor, has just set off from the Russian Pacific port of Nakhodka with his wife Nelli and their three children, aged between 6 and 17, to sail round the world.

They left with warnings ringing in their ears. "Several specialists say that this family's call of the sea is something that cannot be justified on commercial, sporting or common sense grounds." It cited the case of a Russian youth who set sail from the Far East in February

in an attempt to reach America, and was never heard of again. The Gusevs should not expect a champagne reception if they return.

Double agents: former KGB staff and would be Mata Hari wishing to visit Sir Colin McColl, now officially named as head of MI6, need look no further than the latest Old Salopian Club, the official list of old boys from Shrewsbury School. The entry for McColl, known as "C" in Whitehall, lists his address in full. This is clearly what John Major had in mind when he launched his own version of glasnost in Britain's not-so-secret service. McColl

shared old boy status with those champions of the exposé, Private Eye's founders: Richard Ingrams, Paul Foot, Christopher Booker and Willie Rushton.

Good as gold

HOW MUCH is an Oscar worth? Hollywood stars who would tear their hearts out to get one will be interested to hear that the answer is \$60,500. That is what the Oscar statuette won by Harold Russell achieved at auction, despite earlier estimates as low as \$20,000. It is the first time an Oscar has been

sold by its original recipient at public auction.

Russell won the award as best supporting actor for his portrayal of a handicapped sailor returning home from the second world war in the 1946 film *The Best Years of Our Lives*. Russell had lost both hands during the war, and won two of the golden statues in March 1947, the second for "bringing aid and comfort to disabled veterans through the medium of motion pictures". Now 78, he says he desperately needed the money to pay for cataract surgery for his wife.

Karl Malden, president of the Academy, which presents the coveted awards, had asked him not to sell the Oscar, offering him a \$20,000 loan from the Academy if he would return the award.

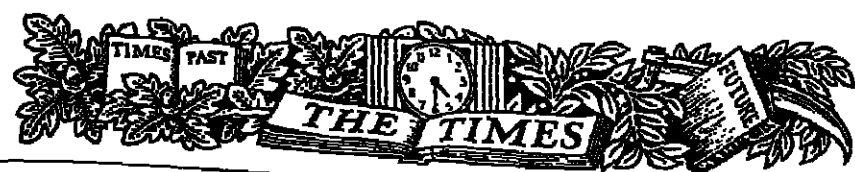
Naturally Russell says was sad at having to part with the award. "I loved the Oscar, but I love my wife more, although I have had the Oscar longer."

Which exit?

CIRCULATION of the Consumers' Association magazine *Which?* *Way to Health* will soon be falling if subscribers follow some of the advice proffered in its latest issue. After many articles devoted to ensuring its readers stay healthy and alive, there is a full page feature on how to die. Legally.

The article deals with taking your own life and refusing to consent to medical treatment. Readers, who are advised in the rest of the magazine about the virtues of summer fruits and multivitamin tablets, are given the address of the Voluntary Euthanasia Society. Editor David Dickinson admits the subject is a potential minefield. "We are devoted to telling people how to live a healthy life. We thought we ought to tell them how to have a good death."

APR 11 1992



ALL NECESSARY MEASURES

The world was sickened last week by the pictures of the camps, the suffering, the reports of massacres. It wanted no more civilians dying in the rubble of their mortared homes, no more children traumatised by the blood around them, no more famished detainees maltreated in squalid camps. It had seen enough. It wanted action.

Western politicians, their backbone stiffened by the uproar, have responded with a sudden burst of speed. The UN Security Council has at last grasped the issue of using force. The UN human rights commission is to meet at the end of the week. Nato has made its plans for armed intervention. And Serbia has been put on warning that air strikes may soon follow.

The Bosnian government, all but destroyed, has bitterly attacked the West's hesitation and especially Britain's reluctance to commit troops. Western opinion wants the camps closed or liberated now. Relief agencies demand the immediate opening of a land corridor to bring in desperately needed food and medicine. And countries overwhelmed by the human tide of refugees want safe havens set up at once.

Britain, France and America have now agreed the text of a Security Council resolution to take "all necessary measures" to deliver relief to Sarajevo and elsewhere in Bosnia. The Americans have had their way in leaving it up to member states to take military action to protect their shipments; but the French have prevailed in insisting that the UN remain in Bosnia and that action be taken under its aegis.

China and several non-aligned members of the council are still nervous about the precedent of such an activist international role in what until recently were the internal affairs of a single state. But with Muslim nations increasingly angry at what they see as Western dithering while their co-religionists are massacred, a vote looks assured. So too does a separate vote to back up the likely demands of the UN human rights commission for access by the Red Cross to all detention camps and their quick closure.

The two votes will not end the war. But

they send the right signals to those prosecuting it, especially the Serbs. By being authorised to take all necessary means the West has equipped itself if necessary to confront the local warlords in Bosnia. And once tanks, helicopter gunships and troops with heavy weapons begin escorting relief convoys, they will make little distinction between an enemy which hinders supplies and one which engages in aggression. The arguments advanced for not facing up to the Serbs, including probably spurious comparison with the guerrilla resistance to the occupying Nazi forces, are about to be tested. There is so far no evidence that the Serbs have the stomach to take on the combined forces of Nato or the Western European Union.

Equally there is clear evidence that the fury over the camps has forced the Serbs to improve their appalling treatment of detainees. Those looking for evidence of war crimes may be frustrated by the hasty attempts now to cover up the massacres and to hide the grisly actions may prevent their repetition. The greater the access — by the Red Cross, by journalists or even by politicians such as Paddy Ashdown — the more likely the wretched prisoners will be afforded some measure of protection.

What the two resolutions do not do is address the causes of the civil war or stop the fighting. The Bosnian Muslims already resent the West's insistence on providing only humanitarian aid; they want guns to defend themselves. And in their frustration they may turn against even their humanitarian helpers. Already they are suspected of shelling the UN headquarters in Sarajevo. And as long as fighting continues the UN's efforts, to feed those made homeless by warfare and bandage those maimed by shelling, will be without end in sight.

The world will have crossed a psychological barrier when the UN approves the use of force. The West must now expect to pay a price. As Britain has repeatedly warned, there could be planes downed, lives lost, and money expended in the Balkan cauldron for years to come. But the world is no longer prepared to stand by and watch.

SCANDAL OF EMPTY HOUSES

Any steps being urged to revive the housing market must do something to attack the painful mismatch between the 146,000 families without homes and the 764,000 houses standing empty. Most of those houses are for sale, and few of the homeless can be assumed to be in a position to buy. But many of those without homes will have jobs, and if not jobs then social security benefit. They can afford to rent. The scandal of empty houses is the scandal of the brazen neglect of the rental sector since the war. Nothing drives this lesson home more than the way house owners can cheerfully contemplate leaving a house empty rather than renting it out.

Rented housing is traditionally available for the poorer and most vulnerable in society. Its decline — over 90 per cent of families rented their homes before the first world war compared with 7 per cent now — threatens those whose existence is already the most precarious. But not only that. That poignant symbol of the 1990s recession, the "for sale" sign outside a repossessed house after mortgage default, is so damaging precisely because the rental sector cannot pick up the pieces of such personal catastrophes.

Those who can no longer afford to buy ought to be able to sell up in good time, and move back into rented housing. There should be a well trafficked open frontier between the two types of housing, with plenty of property being transferred from one use to the other, and families switching likewise as job mobility or misfortune dictates. But the 1988 Housing Act has provided nothing like enough incentive to persuade owners that letting housing for rent can be a useful way of making a fair profit.

The series of articles on empty housing, which ends today in *The Times*, points to the same conclusion. The reluctance to let has

deep origins. There is social prejudice against landlords generally. Among would-be landlords, there is a fear of laws biased so far towards tenants that regaining possession was almost impossible. Mortgage interest tax relief for mortgage-holding owner-occupiers is a fiscal bias against rented housing, which enjoys no such privileges and which as a result is not profitable enough to attract investors.

There are numerous proposals for correcting these distortions by manipulating tax regulations short of overt subsidy of landlords. Housing benefit for the lower paid in the private rental sector does not go far enough. And in spite of the innovation of the six-month assured short-hold tenancy agreement in the 1988 Act, the balance between landlord and tenant over repossession for non-payment of rent is still not fair enough to encourage more landlords into this form of housing. Court delays add to the vexations of a landlord's life. It is no wonder they would rather leave a house empty.

Many families were disastrously persuaded to move into house ownership from the public housing rental sector in the middle and late 1980s when they could ill afford it. They are now mocked by the sight of good houses standing empty for months or years, for no other reason than that the owner — sometimes a public body such as the Minister of Defence, sometimes a building society — is waiting for house prices to revive.

The housing market includes private and public-sector rented accommodation. If there is further public money available for housing, it is into the private rented sector that it should be spent. The test of policy towards the private rental sector must be how many of those 764,000 empty houses can be brought back into occupation.

FLEEING FROM DEBT

People are still concentrating on paying off their debts instead of doing their economic duty by going shopping, according to new credit figures published yesterday. The Central Statistical Office records that consumers repaid £135 million debts in June compared with £19 million in May. These figures used to show the amount of new credit advanced to consumers, but the converse, debt repayment, has become the star feature of the statistics over the past 18 months.

Spending is one of the key motors to push the economy out of recession. The latest figures show that the unobliging public is still digging into its debt mountain, and so prolonging the recession. Such public attitudes show a lack of confidence in the certainties of the current experts and the reassertion of an older folk wisdom.

Until the rise of late modern capitalism getting into debt was in most societies considered a shameful failure. To be held in a debtors' prison was a disgraceful disgrace. As the old Japanese proverb goes: better go without rice for a little than be in debt for long. The older middle-class generations in this country were brought up never to run into debt, if they could find anything else to run into, even when it came to buying a house or a motor car. And the lower classes, when pushed on Thursday night, went to the pawnbrokers; and they saved up to be able to afford a private funeral.

The never-never credit society of the last decade, with instant gratification of desire at the flash of a credit card and the psychometric measurements of credit ratings, has run into one of its paradoxes. The only people who are now safe to lend money to are

those who do not need it. Those who really need it are very big risks. Banks will lend you an umbrella, but only when it is not raining. Samuel Johnson noticed a paradox of debt two and a half centuries ago: "Small debts are like small shot; they are rattling on every side, and can scarcely be escaped without a wound; great debts are like cannon; of loud noise but little danger."

The latest innovation, reported in *The Times* today, is to ask psychologists to assess the credit-worthiness of executives asking for millions to finance a management buy-out. They will investigate such intimate questions as emotional stability, ability to cope with stress and pressure, management style, adaptability, limitations and strengths.

To employ such means implies a lack of confidence in their own intuition as bankers, perhaps through coming to share the public's view of them. Before computer credit-rating, these judgments were made by the old-fashioned bank manager, member of Rotary and pillar of society, listening to town gossip in the discreetest possible way. But it was his 1980s successors who pushed credit on the nation and the world, with the result that their own credit, in the confidence game, is now heavily overdrawn.

The banks lent generously to Eastern Europe and then even more so to Latin America. They are still writing off their huge Third World bad debts. In the property boom of the 1980s they lent to property companies in Britain as if there were no tomorrow. And tomorrow came. Modern bankers will need all the aid psychology can offer, if they are to regain the public's confidence. And until that happens, the flight from debt will continue.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5600

Actions, not words, needed to stop Balkan conflict

From Sir Reginald Hibbert

Sir, Although they have centuries of experience of fighting wars against one another, the Western powers are having to learn again the hard way in Yugoslavia that wars can be ended only when one side or the other gets the upper hand and bends or breaks the will of its opponent.

After several false starts, there is now unanimity about those who will need to be bent or broken in Yugoslavia, but uncertainty about how to achieve it. It may be that sanctions and ostracism will eventually sober the Serbs, but the cost to Serbia's neighbours of waiting for that to happen may be disastrously high.

The case against intervening with Western ground forces is very strong. But it is difficult to understand why the government is so set against supplying weapons to Bosnia so that it can subdue the insurgent Serbs within its frontiers.

It ought to be possible for the staffs of Nato and/or the Western European Union to work out a supply package which would give Bosnia a chance of inflicting a signal defeat or two on the Serb forces. The weapon might be bought or hired from surplus stocks in eastern Europe. It would be a novel task for the staffs and might become a novel form of lend/lease.

It might be argued that it is impossible to supply weapons and humanitarian aid simultaneously. But this is not necessarily the case. It would be a question of dosage and of choosing carefully, in consultation with Bosnia, the time and place for each sort of support.

It would be important to declare openly to Serbia the general line of policy being followed and to make it

clear that the build-up would continue inexorably until the Serbs retreated from their efforts to dictate solutions to their neighbours by force. They could also be warned that Albania would be supported in the same way if the Serbs precipitated greater violence in Kosovo.

A three-prong policy — arms for the oppressed, humanitarian aid for the victims and diplomacy aimed at a peace conference — might have a chance of success. A two-prong policy leaving out the first ingredient is less promising.

Yours faithfully,
REGINALD HIBBERT,
Frondeg, Pennal,
Machynlleth, Powys.
August 10.

From Sir Richard Storey

Sir, Why does the prime minister — "I don't detect any support in Parliament or in public opinion" (report, August 4) — not think that it is his job to lead? While we read of genocide his government waits to be coerced by public opinion, for constituents to fill post bags.

I once heard a shadow cabinet minister, speaking of trade union reform, say to the leader of the opposition, Lady Thatcher: "The people are not ready for such reform." She retorted: "It is our duty to make them ready." The trade unions were reformed.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD STOREY,
Sutton House,
Malton, Yorkshire.

From Mr James Heitz Jackson

Sir, Douglas Hurd's touching belief in the efficacy of discussion and pressure in forcing Serbian acquies-

cence to UN and EC demands, while continuing to exclude the possibility of military action, can only convince aggressors that they may, quite literally, get away with murder. If international institutions tasked with keeping the peace are given no teeth, and if the use of military coercion is ignored as a potential means of securing humanitarian aid, then the very credibility of those international institutions must be questioned.

We are faced with the possibility of dreadful escalation: if Sarajevo falls, Kosovo is invaded; Albania and Greece become involved; the Muslim states agitate for unilateral action; and the United Nations is left still further behind. The splinters and fall-out from the collapsing structure will do more than simply hurt or embarrass the government.

Sincerely,
J. HEITZ JACKSON,
27a Cyril Mansions,
Prince of Wales Drive,
Battersea, SW11.
August 7.

From Mr Greville Janner, QC, MP for Leicester West (Labour)

Sir, Red Cross inspection is not enough. At best, it may act as a deterrent to some ultimate cruelty, but the most brutal will certainly be hidden. The Chief Rabbi is right (letter, August 8). Moral and political imperatives combine with tragic memories of yesterday to demand international military intervention today. Swift, positive, invincible — and now before Iran fills the vacuum.

Yours faithfully,
GREVILLE JANNER,
House of Commons,
August 10.

Prescribing drugs

From Mr Ivan Ostrin

Sir, Your report, "GPs slow to use new, expensive medication" (August 1), will strengthen the belief held by many patients that new drugs are being withheld because of cost.

The overriding single concern facing GPs in prescribing new drugs is not their cost, but their safety and efficacy. Over the years we have seen many new drugs, some like Oprel, introduced with a fanfare of publicity, rapidly withdrawn because of unexpected side effects, many serious.

Furthermore, the public, largely through media publicity, are becoming more informed about new drugs, and threat of litigation by patients with real or perceived side effects is an increasingly worrying factor.

Looking at the results of the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry's survey, it seems that the cause for concern is not that GPs in the UK, as well as Belgium, Denmark and Germany are prescribing relatively few items, but that countries like France, and also Italy, are prescribing so many.

Yours faithfully,
IVAN OSTRIN,
112 Mill Lane Medical Centre,
112 Mill Lane, NW6.
August 5.

Phone-box adverts

From Mrs Inga Haag

Sir, As Councilor Robert Davis points out (letter, July 30) the question raised by Ms Nina Lopez-Jones's letter of July 23 is not whether prostitution is good or bad, but why the oldest profession in the world should be entitled to the privilege of free advertising — a privilege which is being financed by BT and the Westminster City Council for cleaning up the litter it causes, and thus by the telephone users and London council-tax payers.

Yours sincerely,
INGA HAAG,
Marylebone Association,
4 Spanish Place, W1.
July 31.

Albert Memorial

From Mr Noel Mander

Sir, Marcus Binney makes a good case for the full restoration of the Albert Memorial (Life & Times, July 29), but he fails to mention one alteration that should be rectified.

Shortly after the last war Lord Montagu was in charge of some restoration work and he had the temerity to turn the final to face east/west, instead of north/south, as Scott left it, therefore spoiling the effect from the Albert Hall. Let us hope that this will be rectified.

Yours etc.,
NOEL MANDER,
The Street, Earl Soham,
Woodbridge, Suffolk.

Machine talk

From the Chairman of Amstrad

Sir, I was disappointed to read of Bernard Levin's experience with "Charlie", his name for the new Amstrad fax and telephone-answering machine ("Like talking to a machine", July 27). This was not because I was worried that his article would deter potential buyers but because Mr Levin had totally misunderstood how to use "Charlie". He wasted his money in buying another telephone-answering device from a competitor of ours.

As an intelligent man, Mr Levin should understand that there is no point in repeating his telephone number. If somebody calls him when he is out they expect him to answer,

Vanishing buses

From Mr B. J. Goodchild

Sir, How right is Sir Christopher Pincher (letter, August 5) in deploring the failure of governments to protect our freedom to get about without a car. He writes with reference to rail travel but the situation in regard to buses is, if anything, worse. At one time most villages could boast a bus service; how many of those away from main roads can do so now?

Even in the early 1980s it was still possible to view large areas of the countryside from the superior van-

Holidays at home

From Mr Charles Owen

Sir, An anglicised version of the continental street-side café might help to satisfy Janet Daley's egalitarian hunger ("Only the last resort", August 4).

The essentials are: rows of tables with the chairs facing towards the street, of which unobstructed views are offered, enabling customers to patronise passers-by at a safe distance rather than each other at teeth-baring short range; families welcome; service of drinks and food by waiter to each table, obviating the

Trees and rainfall

From Mrs Joyce Butter

Sir, Professor Mowbray (letter, July 27) has drawn attention to the undoubted alteration in climate in the Gulf states, which I also witnessed between 1970 and 1990.

Both Sheikh Rashid al-Maktoum's massive tree planting (and golf course) in Dubai and Sheikh Zaid al-Narayan's similar programme of tree plantations in adjacent Abu Dhabi contributed to this ecological miracle, which I, too, believed in.

This could happen in Africa also — but the trees and turf in Dubai and Abu Dhabi are dependent on drip irrigation, which is expensive. Drawn from shrinking aquifers beneath desert sands, and from large desalination plants at the coast, the

Pedestrianised London

From Sir Nicholas Goodison

Sir, I am grateful to Mr Alex Segal of Westminster City Council (letter, July 17) for explaining why the council has not done more to pedestrianise suitable parts of central London. But I worry about two of his remarks.

First, he rightly observes how lucky we are to have the parks to walk in. But that was not the point of my letter. What we need to do is reduce the traffic and the pollution and improve the quality of life in the streets.

Second, he says, as his council has said for 30 years, that there is a need to "keep the traffic moving". This is really no excuse for holding back on schemes of pedestrianisation. Pedestrianisation would in itself be a

need for lone customers to feel conspicuous, in particular women on their own, otherwise a prey to ogles while self-serving at a bar counter; uncurtained floor-to-ceiling windows open in warm weather but closed, with normal ill-judged heating, in winter.

For those customers who cannot face daylight, hostile scrutiny and, perhaps, the quiet, self-assurance of professional waiters, there should be a dark, smoky, noisy pub-like bar in the far back of the premises.

Yours truly,
CHARLES OWEN,
25 Montague Street, W1.

expense can be absorbed in oil-rich countries, but not in impoverished African states. People who have to carry jerrycans of water a long way to their huts for cooking and washing cannot water more than a very few saplings until they are established.

The solution to desertification would depend on aid for a reliable piped water-supply. Only then could the repetitive pattern of drought and famine be reversed in time to save Africa. Even then, such schemes would depend on the stern discipline so easily exerted by sheikhs in their fiefdoms, and so difficult to achieve elsewhere. Let us hope it happens.

Yours truly,
JOYCE BUTTER,
Whitehill,
Gordon, Berwickshire.

deterrent to traffic. If there were less traffic there would be less need to keep it moving.

I am glad that he and his council would welcome other ways, such as road-pricing, of deterring traffic from central London. Certainly there are measures which central government could take to deter rather than encourage traffic (Julie Fitzgerald's letter, July 21) and to improve public transport. But Mr Segal and his colleagues should move more positively themselves and explain what large-scale pedestrianisation, which I am delighted to hear the council supports, means in terms of areas and streets.

Yours faithfully,
NICHOLAS GOODISON,
(Chairman), TSB Group plc,
PO Box 33, 25 Milk Street, EC2.

he will record a perfect outgoing message. To prove this, he should call my secretary; she will give him my direct line number which has one of these machines hooked on to it and he will hear my outgoing message.

Finally, I must assure Mr Levin and your readers that I do not use competitors' products. I have one of these wonderful machines at home in the UK, one in my overseas home, and one in my office right beside my desk. I have not given any of them the name Charlie; but they serve me very well and will continue to do so.

Yours sincerely,
ALAN SUGAR,
Chairman, Amstrad plc,
Brenwood House,
169 Kings Road, Brentwood, Essex.

Law constraint on County Hall sale

From Mr Chris Shepley

Sir, The London Residuary Body casts doubt upon the London School of Economics' bid for County Hall (report, August 5) on purely financial grounds. It considers it "not worthy of serious consideration". This is a short-term, narrow-minded and unimaginative response to an unusually beneficial proposal. But it raises a wider issue.

The LRB is like other central and local government and public bodies in having some form of legal requirement to obtain the best financial return for land or buildings which are sold. The fact that this should not be the maximum possible price but the best price having regard to planning policy for the site is often overlooked.

Those of us unfortunate enough to have to negotiate with these bodies are used to their agents and officers adopting a pained expression regretting that the most commercially expedient proposal is being accepted, wishing they could be more public-spirited, but explaining sadly that the law requires them to obtain the best value for the site.

These rules have led to a nationwide rash of inappropriate, financed planning applications over the last few years, many of which have inevitably been approved by local authorities or on appeal.

The government could take fewer actions more beneficial to the community than the removal of these requirements. Of course finance should be a factor — but certainly not the pre-eminent one, as it is at present. Public bodies would be wise in any event never again to rely on the sale of land and buildings to sustain themselves, since they now know that such a supply of income could suddenly dry up.

County Hall is just one of very many cases when the short-term financial imperative means that opportunities for wider or longer-term benefits (financial, social, cultural, educational, or simply admirable) may be lost.

Yours sincerely,
CHRIS SHEPLEY (Chairman,
Planning Policy Committee),
The Royal Town Planning Institute,
26 Portland Place, W1.

Policing style

From Mr Robin Moffat

Sir, Your second leader, "A plus to Imbert" (July 30), stressed the need to maintain the present policing style, so effectively developed by the Metropolitan police commissioner during the past five years. Every professional man and woman in the service must learn to respond to the community's requirements and to its wishes.

Nevertheless, it must be recognised that a small minority, in most urban communities, is at all times hostile to any form of action by the police, whose task is immensely difficult. Young constables, faced daily by verbal abuse and physical violence coming from villains crazed by alcohol and drugs, have earned our profound gratitude and respect. These officers deserve maximum support from seniors who are no longer in the front line.

In 1987 you described Sir Peter Imbert as "a good thinking copper" with a quick mind (report, February 28). Remember also when he was the Thames Valley chief constable he allowed the television cameras into police stations, which aroused internal criticism in 1980. Subsequent events have proved that to have been a correct and courageous decision.

Finally, you might have mentioned Sir Peter's courage of a different kind when he returned to serve the capital after recovering from two complicated major surgical procedures. He will be a hard act to follow.

Yours truly,
ROBIN MOFFAT
(Senior forensic medical examiner,
Metropolitan Police Service,
10 Harley Street, W1.
July 31.

Gold for Barcelona

From Mr Ian S. McIntyre

Sir, The general consensus is that the Olympics were brilliantly organised. The ceremonial was a revelation to the millions watching round the world, showing as it did the typical flair and creativity of the Catalan people.

From all accounts, the facilities for the 10,000 athletes and for the legions of reporters were the best ever, and it was obvious from the television coverage that the track and field events started on time, every time. To top it all, the Spanish won 22 medals in sports ranging from judo to the 1500 metres regarded by many as the high point of the whole Games.

The new Spain is a very different world from the old days of inefficient bureaucracy, *siespas* and "mañana". If Manchester succeeds in its goal to hold the Olympic Games in 2000, it will be interesting to see if we can match Barcelona's achievements.

Yours faithfully,
IAN S. MCINTYRE,
Orchard House,
Ashwellthorpe, Norfolk.
August 10.

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Letters to the editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 071-782 5046.

OBITUARIES

LORD DEVLIN

Lord Devlin, PC, FBA, former law lord and writer, died on August 9 aged 86. He was born on November 25, 1905.

Patrick Devlin was an outstanding judge and brilliant jurist. Throughout his life he was a formidable champion of justice, a profound lawyer and a perceptive observer of the acts and omissions of the legal establishment. After a distinguished career he used his searching concern about potential miscarriage of justice as a leading campaigner for the release of the Guildford Four. He was also the first non-journalist chairman of the now defunct Press Council and a notable chairman of public enquiries whose findings were renowned for their clarity of thought and sturdy integrity.

At the age of 42 Devlin was the youngest judge to be appointed this century when he became a Justice of King's Bench Division in 1948. His most celebrated case was the trial and acquittal in 1957 of John Bodkin Adams, the Eastbourne doctor accused of poisoning a patient. Devlin was born into a Roman Catholic family. His father was an architect practising in Aberdeen. His two brothers were Christopher Devlin, the Jesuit priest and author, and William Devlin, the actor. Two of his sisters were nuns. He thought of going into the priesthood. Devlin was educated at Stonyhurst and Christ's College, Cambridge, where his academic achievements gave little indication of his subsequent brilliance. At the Cambridge Union, however, he displayed all the charm, logic and eloquence of the consummate advocate. He succeeded Michael Ramsey, the future Archbishop of Canterbury, as president of the union in 1926.

He was called to the Bar in 1929 by Gray's Inn, having been a pupil of Cartwright Sharp. Almost immediately after his call he became legal secretary to the Attorney-General, Sir William Jowitt, and returned with Jowitt to practise in the Temple in 1931. Although he was prosecuting counsel to the Mint from 1931 to 1939, most of his work lay in the commercial field. During the second world war he helped in the legal department of the Ministry of Supply. He took silk in 1945. In 1947 he was appointed Attorney-General to the Duchy of Cornwall. In 1948 he was made a judge of the King's Bench Division at the age of 42.

For the next 15 years he sat as a judge and there were few better in this century. Although he had virtually no experience of criminal work at the Bar, he soon became a first-class Assize judge. One of his directions to the jury in a murder trial on provocation was described by the Lord Chief Justice as a model for all time. His conduct of the famous trial and acquittal of John Bodkin Adams at the Old Bailey showed a determination to adhere to principles of evidence in the face of great public hostility to the accused.

His trial also produced a clash with the Attorney-General, Sir Reginald Manningham-Buller, made all the more poignant by the fact that both men were at that time considered to be in the running for the succession to Lord Goddard as Lord Chief Justice. Many years later, after the deaths of all the important participants in the trial, Devlin published an account of it in which he criticised the conduct of the attorney-general. This provoked profound indignation in some legal quarters. It was the only time in a long public life in which he was subjected to serious opposition. He took little notice of it.

In all his judgments he showed an exceptional flair for a discussion of the principles governing the case, and for reconciling or explaining previous decisions according to such principles. He thought long and deeply and undertook endless research when engaged in this task. His judgments became particularly brilliant, if sometimes rather long, after he became a Lord Justice of Appeal in 1960 and a Lord of Appeal



in Ordinary in 1961. Before these rapid promotions he had been for three years the first president of the Restrictive Practices Court.

This was a position of novelty and importance, and one which most of his brethren on the Bench are reputed to have shunned. They thought it wrong for the judiciary to enter the arena of political controversy which they feared might be involved in considerations of economic policy and "the public interest", on which the Restrictive Trade Practices Act of 1956 required the court to pronounce. Devlin had no such inhibitions. He believed that it was perfectly possible and proper for a judge to apply such considerations without jeopardising his political neutrality, provided he scrupulously followed the terms of, and guidance given by, the act. By his conduct of the court he broke down any subsequent judicial distrust of this activity.

In 1963 he was 58 and at the height of his powers. He was the youngest law lord and clearly destined soon to preside over the country's highest court. Suddenly he resigned. The cause of this drastic step was not clear. Some thought that he had found it difficult to work with the Lord Chancellor, Lord Dilhorne, as his old adversary Sir Reginald Manningham-Buller had now become. Others thought he wished to devote himself to his Wiltshire farm. Others attributed it to growing deafness, although at this stage it was less a physical defect than an almost conscious defence against the clamour of fools.

The real reason was an increasing impatience with the method and conditions of work which then prevailed in the House of Lords. His visits to America and his friends

among American lawyers, among whom Dean Acheson was prominent, had convinced him of the superiority of the procedure of the Supreme Court, with its written briefs and limited time for oral argument. He considered that the practice in the House of Lords, in which counsel read out, often for days on end, the entire record of the proceedings in the lower courts, to be boring, wasteful and extravagant. He canvassed support for a radical reform on the American model but received virtually none. Now most of his suggestions have been adopted.

Coupled with this frustration came irritation at the absence of decent facilities in the House of Lords. In the law courts a judge is accustomed to a large room, which can house his library, a clerk and a secretary. When he was promoted to the Lords, Devlin found that he was given a desk and a small share in a typing pool. His efforts to secure better conditions of work produced no greater success than his efforts at modernising procedure.

His resignation coincided with a development in the work and prestige of the Press Council. Cecil King and other newspaper proprietors were anxious to raise the authority of this body by securing as its chairman a figure of national reputation and high judicial qualities. Devlin was the perfect man for the job, which he conducted with great diplomacy, always remembering the voluntary nature of the council and never reverting to the more dictatorial manner of the Bench. He regarded the council not as a censorious tribunal, but as a body whose function was to harmonise relations between the press and the public. Before his resignation, he had

acted as chairman of various public enquiries. In 1955, he examined the working of the dock labour scheme, a task he was to repeat ten years later. In 1959 he chaired the commission to enquire into civil disorder in Nyasaland. The report vindicated the governor's resort to emergency powers, but was awkward and unwelcome to the government of the day in some of its phraseology, particularly the statement that Nyasaland was, albeit temporarily, "a police state".

After his resignation, he became more than ever in demand for public duties. In 1964 he became a member of the *Tribunal Administratif* in Geneva, a body concerned to hear grievances of the employees of international organisations. In 1965 he was appointed chairman of the joint board of the national newspaper industry.

A great deal of his energy was devoted to warding off attempts to lure him back. He preferred to spend his time writing, lecturing and broadcasting. Of all these arts he was a master. He specialised in discussion on the interrelation between law and morality. He did not separate the two as strictly as some other polemicists. He thought that the function of the criminal law was something more than the preservation of public order and that it embodied and nurtured the morality of the community it served. He was challenged in this view by Herbert Hart, professor of jurisprudence at Oxford, and for years these two giants of controversy were locked in intellectual combat by the written or spoken word in Europe, America and Australia. The argument reached the heights of philosophy and at this level it was generally thought that the professor had won.

Devlin was a great expounder of such English problems as the function of the jury, the principles of criminal prosecution, the nature of motoring offences, the rights and duties of doctors to incurable patients, the utility of preliminary proceedings and the desirability of reporting them in the press. He had a unique gift by which he could reason closely and professionally and yet make it all intelligible and interesting to the laity. Although a conservative by temperament, he was a reformer in legal matters. He would have made a great Lord Chancellor.

Academic distinctions crowded upon him. While a puisne judge, he was appointed chairman of the council of Bedford College, University of London. Characteristically he resigned when he became sceptical of the value of higher education for most girls. In 1965 he became a doctor of law of Oxford, and in 1966 of Cambridge, Leicester and Sussex. He was an honorary fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, and High Steward of the university.

No one meeting Devlin for the first time would have assumed him to be a judge. He did not possess a commanding figure. He did not seem bowed down by learning. He was neither pompous nor reserved. He had enormous charm and a great sense of humour.

He was blessed in his family life. In 1932 he married Madeleine, the younger daughter of Sir Bernard Oppenheimer. They had four sons and two daughters. At university Devlin renounced the Roman Catholic faith. Several years later, his wife and five of his children adopted it. These conversions in no way impaired the idyllic happiness of their life together on his farm in Wiltshire — a county which increasingly absorbed his attention and of which he was chairman of Quarter Sessions for many years — and in their house in the Algarve, where he spent two or three months every year writing his books. The best of these was *Too Proud to Fight*, a brilliant study of the forces operating on the mind of President Woodrow Wilson.

Indeed, as he approached the age of 70 he became increasingly active. He was in great demand on television. He served as an arbitrator in a series of heavy commercial disputes in India. Every year he would chair at least one public enquiry, such as that for the Confederation of British Industry on employer organisations or that for his fellow author and friend, Roy Jenkins, on problems of identification in criminal evidence.

Devlin will be remembered as much for what he did in public life outside the court room as for his forensic and judicial achievements, distinguished though he was as an advocate and judge. One of his abiding concerns was for the integrity of the criminal justice system and the maintenance of jury trial.

He had a horror of miscarriages of justice and a keen nose for smelling them out. In 1986 he read Robert Kee's remarkable book *Trial and Error*, and was persuaded that there had been a gross miscarriage of justice in the case of the Guildford Four who had been convicted in 1975 of murder in terrorist bombing attacks on public houses frequented by soldiers.

He was especially troubled by rejection by the Court of Appeal of new evidence. He believed that by themselves dismissing the appeal the members of the Court of Appeal had assumed the role of a jury. The credibility of the new evidence, he argued, was not for them; the accused had a right to have it considered by a jury before they could be convicted.

He joined with Lord Scarman in the campaign for the review of the Guildford Four — a campaign which, supported by Cardinal Hume, proved successful. The case illustrates his zest for a fight in a cause which he held dear and his tenacity in defence of what he saw as true principle.

Devlin was reconciled with the Catholic Church in his last few days. He leaves his widow, six children and innumerable grandchildren.

DR MARY McHUGH

Dr Mary Patricia McHugh, coroner for the southern district of London, 1965-85, died on August 6 aged 77. She was born on June 5, 1915.

MARY McHugh was Britain's first woman coroner and one of the most independent. To the fury of some of those who had to deal with her, if she decided on a course of action, she carried it through with resolution, if not obstinacy, and her reasons for it were sometimes unexpected, though in her eyes rational. Within two months of her being appointed by the Greater London Council, councilors in Croydon were up in arms when it was reported that she had decided to hold all inquests from the Croydon district several miles away in Sutton until a new court house was built.

She went against the prevailing mood over car deaths. The Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths and the British Guild for Sudden Infant Death Study both wanted in 1974 to abolish the need for an inquest which upset parents. McHugh, steeped in medicine and the law, refused support.

Nothing seemed to daunt her. She took on the legal establishment in 1984 over what she saw as an issue of principle in a case which had a whiff of espionage about it. She announced in November 1983 that she would hold in private an inquest into the death of Dennis Skinner, 54, a British banker who fell to his death from his Moscow flat.

The *Observer* won a court stay on the inquest, arguing that inquests could be held in private only when matters of national security were involved and that she was acting in excess of her duties.

Rumours after Mr Skinner's death that he was involved with British intelligence led to denials by the Foreign Office and the Home Office that his death was connected with national security.

When McHugh changed her mind and said she would hold the inquest in public it still could not go ahead because she refused to go to the High Court to get the stay lifted by agreement with *The Observer*.

Lord Justice Watkins in the High Court called her "a mistress of discourtesy." She had failed without reason to hold the inquest in public and refused to recognise the fact that she should have done so. Next day McHugh found it "quite deplorable" what had been said about her. In an affidavit filed in the High Court she said she considered it was not in the interests of national security to let it be disclosed how the security forces operated. She wanted to question Foreign Office officials with access to classified

information. Her last big argument, in 1955, was over kidney transplants. Surgeons accused her of blocking the operation by insisting that post-mortem examinations be held on potential donors, making it impossible to get vital organs. The two surgeons said that outside London there was no trouble: coroners' officers would ring them if they found a kidney donor card.

There was, of course, a counter argument: that was, ensuring that the speed necessary is not at the expense of procedure designed to safeguard would-be donors. And McHugh was a stickler for what she regarded as proper.

McHugh had a broad and sometimes restless outlook. Her educational route took her to Nymphenburg, Munich, to Notre Dame, Clapham and thence to Birmingham University, where she combined medical degrees with a PhD in the faculty of laws at London four years later. Her first job was, however, medical, as a house physician and anaesthetist at St. Chad's Hospital, Birmingham, from 1942 to 1943. While in general practice in London from 1944 to 1965 she was called to the Bar at the Inner Temple in 1959, reflecting her interest in the interplay between the law and medicine.

This was to find expression in her role as coroner for the southern district of London, a post she held from 1965 to 1985, despite the storms which sometimes buffeted her. She had an original and pioneering mind. She was a past chairman of the Whole Time Coroners' Association and was a member of the British Academy of Forensic Sciences.

She was a founder member of the Royal College of General Practitioners, which, like her other interests, illustrated her concern for professional standards. She was an associate of the Institute of Linguists. She was a medico-legal columnist for *Pulse* and had written also on treasure trove and the law.

Mary McHugh had one son and two daughters of her marriage, which was dissolved in 1952.



August 11 ON THIS DAY 1905

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAIL DISASTER

INQUEST AND VERDICT

Mr Samuel Brighouse, coroner for South-West Lancashire, resumed the inquiry yesterday at the Public Offices, Blundellsands, into the railway disaster at Hall-road Station, near Southport, on July 27, whereby 20 lives were lost. Mr E.G. Hemmings and Mr F.E. Smith appeared for the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company. Mr Ashton Fletcher was chief mechanical engineer and later general manager of the old Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway.

Mr Boote, the signalman at Hall-road Station on the night of the accident, stated that on the arrival of the 6.20 slow Liverpool to Hall-road train, he put the signals off and set the points to the middle siding into which the train was shunted. It was impossible, as stated by the driver, that the outer distance signal was against him and the inner distance signal for him No 38 signal was against the driver at the time, but witness pulled it off. As the train was drawing up to the outer home signal the witness forgot to reverse the points and pulled off No. 38, which was then in favour of the driver.

In reply to a question as to whether there was a system of fines against signalmen for any delay of express trains, the witness stated that the manager reported against them and they were fined. He had never been fined for stopping an express. He was once fined 10s for being asleep on duty.

Mr Boote stated that an hour before the express came along he had to deal with about 24 trains; he had to make eight or nine entries in his book in respect of each. There was a level crossing which he had to open nearly a dozen times a day, and there was a telephone which he had to attend to. He further stated that he had never used the green flag before for an express train, but on this occasion he lost his head.

The jury found that the accident was caused by a mistake by signalman Boote and driver Rimmer, which was censurable, but not criminal.

him; the pointsman waved the flag continually indicating to the witness that he was to go "right away." He put on the current again, and when he got to the end of the platform he saw that the starting signal was shown on this. This occurred when he was close on it. He noticed the points set for the middle road siding. He at once shut off the current and tried to brake, but he could not avoid a collision with the train in the middle road siding, and he remembered nothing more until the Tuesday following.

MAJOR-GENERAL GRAHAM MILLS

Major-General William Graham Stead Mills, CBE, who died on July 29 aged 75, was General Officer Commanding West Midlands District, 1968-70. On retirement from the Army he was, successively, warden of Le Court Cheshire Home and a member of the management committee of Park House, Sandringham. He was born on June 23, 1917.

GRAHAM Mills was a man of paradox. In his younger days, he was and looked the classic military officer of the 1930s: over 6ft tall, spare framed, clipped moustache, a disciplinarian who demanded the highest military and personal standards, and expected others to do the same.

Yet after he retired from the Army, he devoted himself in a most caring way to the Le Court Cheshire Home, where he was a popular warden for five years, and to Park House, Sandringham, as a member of the management committee, which set up this country house hotel for the disabled after it had been donated by the Queen to the Cheshire

Foundation. The link between the two facets of his character was a kindness and honesty of purpose. He was a quiet, practical man of few words, who was good with his hands and with people.

His strength lay in man management, which was reflected in his success as adjutant of his regiment in the 1940s and with the disabled in the 1970s.

Mills was the son of William Stead Mills, of Halifax, and was educated at Merchiston Castle School, Edinburgh. He was reading agriculture at Reading University in 1938. The Munich crisis led him to abandon his degree and accept a regular commission in the local Royal Berkshire Regiment, the Supplementary Reserve. He did his initial training in the 1st Battalion under Lieutenant-Colonel Dempsey, who, later, as General Sir Miles Dempsey, became one of Montgomery's most trusted commanders.

Mills left for India to join the 2nd Battalion at Lahore in 1939, and two years later became their adjutant in Bombay. His days with his regiment ended in 1944 when he went to the staff college, Quet-



ta. From there he was posted to 14th Army Headquarters in Burma where he served General Slim, first as GS02 (Operations) and then as GS01 (Operations) throughout the reconquest of Burma. After the war ended in the

Far East, he was seconded as an exchange officer in the US Army Intelligence in Washington for three years. On his return to England in 1950, he volunteered for service with the Parachute Regiment and joined the 2nd Battalion as a

company commander, staying with it until 1953 when he was given the challenging job of going to the Sudan to set up the Army Staff College in Khartoum, which became one of the more successful Sudanese institutions in spite of that country's growing political instability.

After a short spell back in England as second-in-command of the 2nd Parachute Battalion, and commanding it temporarily for several months, he regained his wartime rank of Lieutenant-Colonel as GS01 in the 2nd Division in BAOR. He then commanded the 17th (TA) Parachute Battalion in Newcastle, 1958-60, before becoming regimental colonel of the Parachute Regiment, where he gained the reputation of providing excellent support for the parachute battalions operating overseas during the counter-terrorist campaigns of the early 1960s.

Mills was regimental colonel when the system of seconding officers to the Parachute Regiment was being modified and a permanent cadre was being established. General Sir Kenneth Darling, colonel commandant, cleared away

the rubble of the old system while Mills laid the foundations for the new regimental structure.

He was promoted brigadier in 1963 and commanded the Territorial Army Brigade in Winchester until 1965, when he was appointed Brigadier General Staff in Aden, a job he held during the two fraught, turbulent years during which direct rule was imposed on the colony before its evacuation in 1967. He came back to England to attend the Imperial Defence College before the Union Flag was finally lowered over Aden.

His last appointment in the Army was as a major-general commanding West Midlands District at Shrewsbury from 1968 to 1970. He joined the Cheshire Foundation almost straightaway, and became the warden of its founder home, Le Court, at Liss, Hampshire, in 1972. He retired to Norfolk in 1977 and was immediately asked to join the management committee, setting up Park House, Sandringham.

His wife, Joyce Evelyn Ramsom, whom he married in India in 1941, died in 1981. Their three sons survive him.

TODAY IN BUSINESS

LIRE WAYS



Wolfgang Münchau argues that rumours about the demise of the Italian economy are greatly exaggerated and misleading
Page 19

SPARKLING

Asprey, the Bond Street jeweller, is reorganising and is promoting Naim Attallah to chief executive
Page 17

PINT CHANGE



Dairy Crest, the "pinta" arm of the Milk Marketing Board, is to be privatised
Page 17

SPLIT VALUES

ICI, after its planned split into two parts, will not be worth much more than ICI as a whole, brokers say
Page 16

LAW TIMES



David Pannick, QC, says contempt of court fines on Channel 4 and Box Productions raise freedom questions
Page 21

THE POUND

US dollar
1.9275 (+0.0005)
German mark
2.8280 (+0.0005)
Exchange index
92.1 (+0.1)
Bank of England official close (4pm)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 share
1731.8 (-21.5)
FT-SE 100
2325.7 (-24.4)
New York Dow Jones
3324.62 (-7.56)
Tokyo Nikkei Ave
15068.34 (-451.93)

INTEREST RATES

London: Bank Base: 10%
3-month interbank: 10%
3-month mortgage: 9.9-9.95%
US: Prime Rate: 6%
Federal Funds: 3.5%
3-month Treasury Bill: 3.13-3.11%
30-year bonds: 10.7-10.75%

CURRENCIES

London: New York:
£ \$1.9240
£ \$1.9270
£ \$1.9280
£ \$1.9290
£ \$1.9300
£ \$1.9310
£ \$1.9320
£ \$1.9330
£ \$1.9340
£ \$1.9350
£ \$1.9360
£ \$1.9370
£ \$1.9380
£ \$1.9390
£ \$1.9400
£ \$1.9410
£ \$1.9420
£ \$1.9430
£ \$1.9440
£ \$1.9450
£ \$1.9460
£ \$1.9470
£ \$1.9480
£ \$1.9490
£ \$1.9500
£ \$1.9510
£ \$1.9520
£ \$1.9530
£ \$1.9540
£ \$1.9550
£ \$1.9560
£ \$1.9570
£ \$1.9580
£ \$1.9590
£ \$1.9600
£ \$1.9610
£ \$1.9620
£ \$1.9630
£ \$1.9640
£ \$1.9650
£ \$1.9660
£ \$1.9670
£ \$1.9680
£ \$1.9690
£ \$1.9700
£ \$1.9710
£ \$1.9720
£ \$1.9730
£ \$1.9740
£ \$1.9750
£ \$1.9760
£ \$1.9770
£ \$1.9780
£ \$1.9790
£ \$1.9800
£ \$1.9810
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£ \$1.9850
£ \$1.9860
£ \$1.9870
£ \$1.9880
£ \$1.9890
£ \$1.9900
£ \$1.9910
£ \$1.9920
£ \$1.9930
£ \$1.9940
£ \$1.9950
£ \$1.9960
£ \$1.9970
£ \$1.9980
£ \$1.9990
£ \$2.0000

GOLD

London: New York:
AM \$350.75 PM \$350.35
Close \$350.40-350.90
C181.60-182.10
New York:
Comex \$350.05-350.55

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent (Aug) \$19.55/bbl (\$19.75)

RETAIL PRICES

RPI: 130.3 June (1987-100)
* Denotes monthly trading price

Business and household bills to fall

BT expected to concede Oftel price demands

By ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH Telecom is expected to acquiesce to a tough new price control regime today after two months of thorny negotiations with Oftel, the telecommunications watchdog.

The telephone company has undertaken in principle to keep price increases at 7.5 per cent below the rate of inflation for the next five years. If the rate of inflation stays low — at present it is below 4 per cent — the formula will need severe cost-cutting or real price cuts to implement. BT has also conceded a package of constraints that should result in real falls in household, as well as business, bills.

Last night, negotiators were still working on the fine print of the agreement, but BT appeared optimistic that a deal could be completed in time for an announcement today.

City analysts are confident BT can continue to push up dividends by 8 per cent a year despite the new regime. But there will be no let-up in BT's massive job-shedding programme. The company expects to cut staff by 35,000 to 175,500, in the year to end-

March 1993. A further 45,000 jobs will be axed in the subsequent three years. By 1996, BT's staff will comprise about 130,000 people.

The continuing job shedding will be the most obvious sign of BT's struggle to achieve the efficiency improvements necessary to make price cuts while maintaining the growth in earnings. However, they also reflect the benefits of BT's huge investment programme. New digital exchanges, more use of optical fibre and efficiency savings in operator services have also enabled it to shed staff.

Because of the new price controls, the benefits should be widely spread, helping other British businesses to contain costs as well as lowering domestic bills.

But BT is likely to argue that growth of competition will be slowed by the refusal of Oftel's director general, Bill Wigglesworth, to countenance substantial rises in rentals for domestic lines. It is also likely to seek to recover more revenue from its fledgling rivals.

BT remains convinced there is an "access deficit", caused

by households that make little use of the phone and pay too little in line rental charges. Oftel insists line rentals cannot be seen in isolation, since it is in BT's interest to encourage the widest possible access to the network.

It is also in BT's interest not to understate the cost of providing local connections, since even now this remains the part of its business least touched by competition. However, competition for domestic users is rapidly developing in some cities, raising a new area of conflict to be addressed by Oftel.

Mercury Communications, part of Cable and Wireless, and the cable television companies that also provide telephone services, are forced to pay fees to BT for the part of each call that passes over BT's telephone network. Mercury applied to Oftel in June for help in winning better terms for its interconnect agreement with BT. Efforts to negotiate a new commercial agreement between the two companies have been stalled.

Oftel's demand that BT set up its long-distance call business as a separate accounting unit is designed to allow a clearer assessment of the costs of providing local calls. That should ease Oftel's task as the regulator strives to settle differences between the two sides.

But many of the difficulties that rivals complain of relate to the design of BT's network, rather than simply price of access.

Although Mercury was established to compete with BT more than eight years ago, BT still commands 93 per cent of Britain's telephone market overall. The outcome of the access dispute will be no less important than the battle over the new price cap. For the terms of the access agreement are likely to dictate the pace at which a truly competitive telecoms market emerges to replace regulation as a way of constraining prices.

Under the new price regime, which comes into effect in August 1993, the maximum charge is inflation minus 7.5 per cent, against inflation minus 6.25 per cent under existing arrangements. This price cap will cover local, trunk and international calls. The agreement is also expected to limit increases for all other prices in switched services to the level of growth of the retail prices index, to prevent BT loading charges on to the least competitive parts of its business.



Panic measures: a dealer feverishly tries to sell stock as the Nikkei falls below 14,000 in Tokyo yesterday morning

London shares slump after market collapses in Tokyo

By MICHAEL TATE IN LONDON AND JOANNA PITMAN IN TOKYO

SHARE prices in London are back at their lowest levels since the Gulf war ended, after the FT-SE 100 share index fell 24.4 points to 2,325.7 yesterday.

In dipping below 2,350, the index fell through a key strategic level, according to stock market chartists, who now believe it could sink as low as 2,150. Most of yesterday's fall came in the first hour as market-makers responded to another slide in Tokyo, where the Nikkei average closed 451.93 lower at 15,068.34.

But once again the London market's fall came against a background of very little business. Fewer than 400 million shares changed hands, as the general lack of interest was exacerbated by the absence on holiday of many dealers.

More than a quarter of the fall, on the first day of a new account, was attributed to shares going ex-dividend, such as ICI, BAT, Rank Organisation and the clearing banks. Equity strategists remain convinced some recovery will be seen by the year-end, although its size is in dispute.

By then, a number of imponderables will hopefully be resolved. Current uncertainties such as the dose-running French vote on Maastricht, the direction of German interest rates and Wall Street's performance are weighing heavily on the London market. Michael Saunders, of Salomon Brothers, feels prices are "still too high", warning of further profit downgradings for 1993. "Institutions are still overbought in equities," he said, but he was not prepared to forecast a further sharp fall. "I expect the market to move broadly sideways."

Nick Knight, at Nomura International, is more pessimistic. "Our downside target is 2,150, although we are still forecasting 2,500 for the end of the year. We are moving inexorably towards a sterling crisis. The government should put up interest rates — but we know that they won't."

Between 70 and 80 per cent of UK equities are held by institutions, compared with about 50 per cent in America, and 20 per cent in Germany. Overseas investors are concerned that any kind of sterling devaluation would see a percentage of their assets evaporate overnight.

In Tokyo, where bankers, businessmen and brokers joined the waves of traffic jams crawling out of town for Japan's annual three-day summer break, the selfless minions who had dutifully volunteered to man the phones in the office in what is usually the quietest week of the year, wished they had not.

The Nikkei nose-dived to below 14,000 at one point during the morning, and only clambered back above 15,000 in a technical rebound during the afternoon.

Hordes of bears lumbered off to tinker with their market forecasts, extending the market's anticipated period of "highly damaging volatility" into September and October, and some of Tokyo's dwindling numbers of jaundiced bulls were considering joining the bears and pushing back their forecast economic recovery dates well into 1993.

"Over the next few months we cannot expect any good news or any good statistics," said Yoshihisa Kitai, an economist at the Long Term Credit Bank. "The prospects are for volatility and a poor performance on the stock market for the rest of this year and possibly into next year," he said, adding yesterday's market collapse was due not to any particularly damaging statistic or

event but a growing malaise resulting from the market's gradual digestion of the economy's fundamental weakness.

"Capital investment and demand in the housing sector are weak and the financial sector is in trouble. Most Japanese businessmen are worried about prospects for recovery in 1993 and a few even about 1994," he said.

As the Bank of Japan maintained a conspicuous silence, Koichi Kato, chief cabinet secretary, tried to reassure the markets yesterday lunchtime, describing the market's morning performance as "regrettable" and repeating his hope that a fiscal package, planned for late August and designed to reinvigorate the economy, will have the desired effect.

While everyone hopes this will bring a restoration of confidence, the relentless day by day problems on the stock exchange are jarring nerves. "The financial sector suffers more every time the Nikkei drops. The system must defend the 14,000 level this time," said Hiroshi Ichihashi, a director at Kleinwort Benson International in Tokyo.

Stock Market, page 18

Rules on flotation relaxed

By NEIL BENNETT, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

THE Stock Exchange has confirmed it is flexible about requirements for flotations after the collapse in public demand for recent new issues.

The exchange's rules state any share flotation worth more than £30 million must include a public offer for sale. An exchange spokeswoman said the rule is being relaxed in some cases. "We are flexible and we have to take account of market conditions," she said.

The move has been prompted by quotations department concern at the low demand for recent public offers. A big part of issues like The Telegraph and Anglian Group has been left without underwriters.

The quotations department has already allowed some recent issuers to place a high proportion of stock with institutions. Now it says it is prepared to allow an entire issue to be placed provided there is a drawback arrangement for private investors.

"We have to ensure there is a proper spread of investors," the exchange said. The yellow book on listing requirements allows rules to be relaxed in unusual circumstances.

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Polygram buys in Hollywood

By MARTIN WALLER

POLYGRAM, the music business 80 per cent owned by Holland's Philips electronics group, is expanding its fast-growing film arm by taking a controlling 51 per cent stake in Interscope, a Hollywood film producer, for \$35 million. Recent hits by Interscope, currently owned by Ted Field, a well-established Hollywood producer who will receive the bulk of the money, have included *Cocktail*, featuring Tom Cruise, *Three Men and a Cradle*, and the hit thriller *Hand that Rocks the Cradle*, starring Rebecca de Mornay as a psychopathic nanny.

Mr Field and Robert Cort,

the Interscope president, are also signing a five-year service agreement to stay with the venture. They are currently completing a series of projects with the Disney studio, but future developments, comprising eight films over the next two years rising to nine or ten by 1997, will be carried out in-house.

Interscope has specialised in medium-budget commercial movies, avoiding both art house movies and huge blockbusters, a policy that will continue. The venture is the biggest yet for Polygram's film side, which has concentrated in the past on distribution.



De Mornay: cash spinner

Senior management put on the couch

By ANGELA MACKAY

CONSIDER this scenario. An investment group is trying to decide whether to lend millions of pounds to finance a management buyout. Because of the lingering recession, the decision will affect the profits of lender and borrower, so whether the buyout team has the skills to make the deal work in these straitened times is a key consideration.

Enter LabWick Psychological Assessments, a small consultancy, which will provide in-depth assessments of managers to try to discover whether they have the bottle to succeed. Dr Stashu Labuc, one of the principals, says it is vital to determine if managers can make the transition from one role to another without the business suffering. "Many investors will not put up the venture capital unless there has been adequate assessment.

Similarly, more companies are having staff psychologically assessed before making senior foreign appointments, which involve hefty relocation costs."

About 60 per cent of LabWick's clients are banks and investment companies seeking to make board appointments. The company claims its assessment process is "gender and culture fair" and has been designed by the directors — psychologists and psychiatrists.

LabWick emphasises its assessments are psychological and thus do not rely on psychometrics — the new fashion of careers and aptitude testing. Dr Labuc says companies want to know a subject's psychology, including emotional stability, ability to cope with stress, leadership and management style, adaptability, motivations, limitations and strengths.

Managers from different countries have different expectations. LabWick has


found British managers seem to prefer consensus management, with interminable meetings. Americans have a more robust approach and tend to transform work into a lifestyle, while the Japanese are expectations-led and less flexible in their approach to decision making.

Companies are also more concerned about a candidate's ability to maintain confidentiality. The growing incidence of white-collar crime and the potential divulgence of commercially sensitive information have led to the development of intensive assessment methods to determine a candidate's overall integrity.

Selection of the best candidate is up to the company, but as Dr Labuc says: "Nature gave us two ends — one to think with and one to sit on and success or failure usually depends on which you use most."

Leading article, page 11

Henlys promises to peg dividend



Keith Bradshaw, chief executive of Takare, the rapidly expanding private nursing home company, is seen here at the Manor House Nursing Home, Southall, Middlesex. The company continued its

with £2.99 million in the
d last year. Turnover was
on, against £12.4 million
Earnings rise to 5.7p
re is an interim dividend
p). Terms, page 18

By MATTHEW BOND

John Asprey will continue as executive chairman of the holding company and will also chair Asprey (Bond Street), with Mr Attallah as his deputy. Mr Asprey controls 51 per cent of the voting rights of Asprey shares.

After the reorganisation, four main board directors, including Edward Asprey, the chairman's cousin, will resign from the company. But all four will immediately be appointed to the board of Asprey (Bond Street).

Mr Attallah is also to be

come managing director of Watches of Switzerland, a role he already fills at Mappin & Webb. Yesterday he explained his plans for Asprey's most recent acquisition. "Mappin & Webb had lost its way a little bit under Ratner's ownership. We revitalised it. Now we plan to do the same with Watches of Switzerland."

"Watches of Switzerland is a magnificent name. It does not take away business from other parts of the group at all. If it is run properly it could expand

Cannon Street Investments, a troubled mini-conglomerate, has sold Pearl Contracts, a supplier of building maintenance services. The buyer is Bimec Industries, which paid 3.25 million of its own shares. Yesterday's share price was 19½p, valuing the transaction at £633,750.

Power pay

GOVERNMENT securities experienced another extremely quiet day, which one dealer summed up as "fairly comoved". The gilt futures moved in a five-cent range, which is very tight standards is given by recent action. The feeling is that things will remain quiet ahead of economic data due later in the week and further details of the gilt auction.													
Data due this week includes producer prices, labour statistics and the retail price index on Friday. The auction will raise between £2 billion and £3 billion. Precise details and the exact size of the auction, which will be for stock of about a 15-year duration, are due on August 18, with the auction due to take place on August 26.													
The shorts did a little better than the longs, with Exchequer 10½ per cent 1997 adding three ticks to £103 1/16. Prices at the longer end were a little weaker.													
1992													
High	Low	Stock	Price	ch	Int	Gst	High	Low	Stock	Price	ch	Int	Gst
SHORTS (under 5 years)													
101½	100%	Each 12-18 1992	100%	...	...	...	121	115%	Trans 14-18 1992-01	115%	+	11.83	81%
101%	100%	Each 24-36 1992	100%	...	...	...	122	116%	Trans 36-60 2002	116%	+	6.48	93%
101%	100%	Each 60-96 1992	100%	...	...	...	107%	100%	Trans 96-200	100%	+	9.52	92%
99%	99%	Parad 6-9 1992	100%	+	6.19	8.98	100%	100%	Trans 12-18 2002	100%	+	9.30	92%
99%	99%	Trans 6-9 1992	99%	+	8.31	9.71	112%	100%	Conv 3-6 2004	102%	+	9.30	92%
99%	99%	Trans 12-18 1992	100%	+	12.22	9.87	113%	100%	Trans 11-14 2001-04	110%	+	10.25	93%
100%	101%	Trans 12-18 1993	100%	+	13.22	9.87	134%	116%	Trans 12-18 2001-02	121%	+	10.34	94%
99%	99%	Trans 12-18 1993	100%	+	13.30	9.87	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
99%	99%	Trans 12-18 1994	100%	+	13.30	9.87	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
99%	99%	Trans 12-18 1994	100%	+	13.30	9.87	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
100%	100%	Each 12-18 1994	100%	+	11.01	9.73	118%	110%	Trans 12-18 2002-07	110%	+	10.23	93%
100%	100%	Each 24-36 1994	100%	+	12.78	9.73	101%	99%	Trans 36-60	99%	+	9.65	90%
100%	100%	Each 60-96 1994	100%	+	13.60	9.73	100%	99%	Trans 96-200	99%	+	9.65	90%
99%	99%	Each 3-6 1990-95	99%	+	3.27	6.10	100%	99%	Trans 12-18 2000	99%	+	9.65	90%
99%	99%	Each 36-60 1995	100%	+	10.10	9.61	100%	99%	Conv 96-201	99%	+	9.23	90%
100%	100%	Trans 12-18 1995	100%	+	11.43	9.61	100%	99%	Trans 12-18 2002-12	100%	+	9.65	91%
110%	108%	Trans 12-18 1995	100%	+	11.75	9.59	100%	99%	Trans 12-18 2015-17	99%	+	9.65	91%
100%	99%	Trans 12-18 1992-96	99%	+	9.10	9.35	27%	24%	Conv 2-5A	29%	+	9.22	87%
100%	99%	Conv 2-5 1996	100%	+	9.85	9.22	27%	24%	Trans 2-5A	29%	+	9.22	87%
114%	110%	Trans 12-18 1996	110%	+	11.87	9.10	27%	24%	Trans 2-5B	29%	+	9.22	87%
114%	110%	Trans 12-18 1996	110%	+	12.80	9.76	25%	29%	Conv 3-6	31%	+	9.22	87%
114%	110%	Trans 12-18 1996	110%	+	13.07	9.76	25%	29%	Trans 3-6	31%	+	9.22	87%
100%	99%	Trans 6-9 1997	100%	+	6.07	8.40	25%	29%	Conv 4-6	31%	+	9.22	87%
100%	100%	Each 10-14 1997	100%	+	10.14	9.50	39%	35%	WMT 12-18	39%	+	9.14	...
112%	110%	Trans 12-18 1997	110%	+	11.73	9.50	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
122%	118%	Trans 12-18 1997	120%	+	12.43	9.77	123%	125%	Trans 12-18 1999	125%	+	2.84	42%
89%	86%	Trans 6-9 1998-99	91%	+	7.41	9.34	178%	178%	Trans 12-18 2000	184%	+	3.84	43%
91%	89%	Trans 12-18 1998	91%	+	9.44	9.45	148%	141%	Trans 12-18 2001	149%	+	4.39	47%
123%	122%	Trans 12-18 1998	122%	+	12.28	9.69	144%	138%	Trans 12-18 2002	140%	+	4.43	46%
123%	122%	Trans 12-18 1998	122%	+	9.41	9.50	94%	94%	Trans 12-18 2003	94%	+	4.43	46%
100%	100%	Conv 10-14 1999	100%	+	9.85	9.44	134%	128%	Trans 12-18 2004	130%	+	4.43	45%
100%	100%	Trans 10-14 1999	100%	+	9.89	9.45	130%	125%	Trans 12-18 2005	131%	+	4.43	45%
118%	118%	Trans 12-18 1999	118%	+	10.27	9.73	121%	115%	Trans 12-18 2006	117%	+	4.43	45%
100%	99%	Conv 9-12 2000	99%	+	9.13	9.38	121%	112%	Trans 12-18 2007	117%	+	4.43	45%
120%	116%	Trans 12-18 2000	116%	+	11.00	9.66	117%	110%	Trans 12-18 2008	119%	+	4.43	44%
126%	99%	Trans 10-14 2001	100%	+	9.44	9.35	99%	...	Trans 12-18 2009	99%	+	4.43	44%

Half-Yearly Statement to 30th June 1992

REPORT ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PHILIPS GROUP

Sales and income fell as a result of the difficult situation in the consumer electronics market, despite a satisfactory performance in other businesses. These difficult conditions were also reflected in the company's financial division but also its picture-tube business, which is a well-established and successful company in the movie sector.

In the last six months of 1992, sales fell by 15% and income by 20%. In the corresponding period of 1991, the decrease in sales was due to the effect of a general decline in demand for electronic goods, movements, on a comparable basis sales rose by 2%. Sales were adversely affected from operations decreased activity from 1,307 million (50% of sales) to 1,070 million (40% of sales). Selling charges fell from 759 million last year to 1,700 million. Unconsolidated companies contributed 1,000 million, or 10% of 1.6 million last year. Net income from normal business operations amounted to 1,000 million compared with 1,000 million last year. In 1991 there was also an extraordinary gain of 505 million arising from the company's interest in Whetford International B.V.

Operating income improved from 1,227 million last year to 1,225 million in 1992. This increase was primarily attributable to mechanical systems and industrial electronics. The operating income of the company's divisions Components and Semiconductor sectors also improved. The operating income in the corresponding period of last year set the result of pressure on prices and the continuing decline of mechanical equipment, such as the TV industry and the Game and Brac. Operating income in this sector fell slightly from 1,000 million last year to 1,000 million in income from picture tubes was largely offset by improved earnings from camera consumers.

Sales in the MicroProcessor sector rose to 1,000 million. Income from this sector's operations increased from 1,730 million to 1,100 million, income not attributable to the company's operations decreased from 1,100 million compared with 1,444 million last year.

Unconsolidated companies

The 1,115 million drop in income from unconsolidated companies was mainly due to the company's participation in Grundig and MEC

STATEMENTS OF INCOME

Amounts in millions of guilders	2nd quarter		Jan to June	
	1992	1991*	1992	1991*
Net sales	12,872	13,084	25,837	26,197
Income from operations	949	652	1,274	1,307
Gearing adjustments	30	27	—	—
Financial income and expenses	-377	-408	-700	-708
Income before taxes	258	271	610	531
Income taxes	-84	-90	-214	-174
Income after taxes	154	175	396	357
Net income of unconsolidated companies	-34	55	-55	50
Share of other group capital in group income	-38	-43	-85	-95
Net income from normal business operations	82	187	256	322
Extraordinary income after taxes	—	365	—	365
Net income	82	552	256	687
Income from operations as a % of net sales	4.6	4.8	4.9	5.0
Income before taxes as a % of net sales	1.8	2.0	2.4	2.0
Income after taxes as a % of net sales	1.2	1.3	1.5	1.4

BUSINESSES FOR SALE

[illegible]

PRODUCT SECTORS

SALES	January to June					
	1982			1981**		
	% growth			% growth		
	sales	nominal	comparable	sales	nominal	comparable
Australia in millions of guilders						
Lighting	3,760	6	3	3,548	0	
Consumer Products	12,592	7	2	11,753	1	-1
Professional Products and Systems	4,436	-18	4	5,738	-5	
Components and Subassemblies	3,481	-16	-9	4,044	-1	
Miscellaneous	1,248	12	0	1,119	-7	-1
	25,537	-1	2	25,197	-1	-
*Adjusted to take account of the effect of exchange rate movements and changes in consolidation						
INCOME						
	January to June					
	1982			1981**		
	deliv- eries	income from opera- tions	as a % of deliv- eries	deliv- eries	income from opera- tions	as a % of deliv- eries
Lighting	3,824	429	11.2	3,583	261	7.3
Consumer Products	12,765	518	8.9	12,596	470	3.7
Professional Products and Systems	4,922	252	5.1	5,893	277	3.1
Components and Subassemblies	4,549	287	6.5	5,250	232	4.4
Miscellaneous	2,403	108	4.5	1,615	73	4.5
Not attributable to a specific product sector		157			44	
Total	28,453	1,274		28,905	1,307	
Inter-company deliveries	-2,846			-2,300		
Net sales	25,607			26,197		
Income from operations as a % of net sales			4.9			5.0

BALANCE SHEETS

Assets in millions of guilders	June 30 1992	December 31 1991
Fixed assets		
Intangible fixed assets	1,324	1,296
Tangible fixed assets	16,828	16,382
Unconsolidated companies	3,354	3,220
Other non-current financial assets	2,868	2,149
	<hr/> 22,864	<hr/> 22,956
Current assets		
Investments	11,771	10,416
Accounts receivable	14,818	14,915
Marketable securities	87	52
Liquid assets	1,089	1,862
	<hr/> 27,715	<hr/> 26,529
Total assets	<hr/> 50,579	<hr/> 49,815
Group equity		
Stockholders' equity	11,668	11,535
Other group capital	1,686	1,688
	<hr/> 13,294	<hr/> 13,223
Provisions		
Long-term	5,897	5,632
Short-term	2,478	2,791
	<hr/> 8,175	<hr/> 8,423
Liabilities		
Long-term	11,569	11,263
Current, interest-bearing	5,904	5,311
Other current liabilities including deferred income and accrued expenses	11,667	11,565
	<hr/> 29,170	<hr/> 28,169
Total capital employed	<hr/> 50,579	<hr/> 49,815

Philips Electronics N.V.
BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

PHILIPS

STOCK MARKET

PHILIP PANGALOS

...and the

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Stock Exchange waives the rules

The collapse in public demand for new issues has clearly unsettled the Stock Exchange and prompted it to tinker with the rules on flotations. The exchange's ability to adapt to market conditions is heartening. Historically, the City's institutions and markets have prospered from their flexibility. This has allowed new products like eurobonds and derivatives to thrive and helped London to remain the dominant financial centre in Europe. The exchange's yellow book on listing requirements is a model of such flexibility. The book lays down exact rules for flotations but includes an all-important waiver that the exchange will consider other marketing arrangements in appropriate circumstances.

The current recession is clearly an appropriate circumstance. Two years of recession have left private investors suffering from intense risk aversion and they have shunned many of the summer's new issues. The exchange says it will allow a new issue to be placed entirely with new institutions, provided private investors have access to the shares through a clawback. Under existing rules any issue worth more than £30 million should include a public offer. If the Stock Exchange and its members want institutions to bail out the new issue market however, they have some hard bargaining to do. Fund managers are being asked to act as quasi-underwriters. They may lose most of their allocation in a good issue and be stuck with all the stock from a less attractive offering. Leading fund managers are making it clear that they will expect a decent turn for these risks. This may include a clawback fee of up to 1 per cent of the issue and a reduced offer price. The demands from institutions will doubtless be higher for the less appealing flotations.

Brokers and their corporate clients have yet to decide whether to take this route to the market. For some it may be a welcome opening. Others may balk at the cost and wait until the private investor regains his appetite.

ICA's options

The Institute of Chartered Accountants is due to decide what action it will take regarding Coopers & Lybrand's role as auditor to the complex web of Maxwell companies. The ICA has received two reports from Imro and SIB, where each regulator gave its account of just how Robert Maxwell managed to steal more than £400 million. The ICA has three options: it can decide to do nothing, conduct an internal investigation or hold a joint disciplinary scheme (JDS) inquiry. The first is unlikely, given the amount of money involved and the duration of Coopers' relationship with Mr Maxwell's companies. In choosing between an internal investigation or a JDS, the institute is opting to either hold the review in private or in public. For Coopers, the most important matter now is to clear the air in an unequivocal manner. This would be best achieved by a JDS inquiry that would result in the publication of a full report.

Moreover, a JDS inquiry would make the Imro and SIB reports public — at least among the concerned parties — and this would be particularly handy for Coopers, which is still trying to obtain copies.

For a matter to come under JDS scrutiny, it must be of public concern and deemed "suitable", which means complicated as far as the ICA is concerned. The Maxwell scandal meets both criteria and coincides with the institute's first cautious moves to try and open up its disciplinary proceedings and general investigations. All the omens point to the ICA grasping the nettle and holding the inquiry into Coopers' conduct in the full glare of publicity.

La dolce vita is off the agenda as Italy prepares to mend its ways

Privatisation is the key to economic reform and the government has already notched up initial successes, says Wolfgang Münchau

Italy is one of those countries that persistently sends misleading and gloomy signals. Observers tend to misread the content of these, to exaggerate their importance and to misjudge their impact. If all past alarmist warnings had been remotely true, the state would no longer exist under its present constitution. Nor would it rank among the leading economies of the European Community.

The country does have a problem with the Mafia, and it also has a problem with the economy, but the economic problem, at least, is clearly solvable. In any case, even a fleeting visitor to the country would happily confirm that while the Italians complain about the economy, they do not complain as much as the British.

Those who in the 1980s hailed *sopasso*, the claim that Italy had overtaken Britain as the world's fifth largest economy, were in essence correct, despite uncertainty over the claim's statistical validity. Italy may have high debts and high interest rates but it also has a well-educated and motivated workforce and a healthy industrial base, even though some large private sector corporations, such as Fiat, Olivetti and Pirelli, have had some difficulties, for their own reasons.

Despite continued political uncertainty after the inconclusive outcome of the general election, the new government, under Giuliano Amato, appears surprisingly determined to address some of the country's most urgent problems. Italy's economic difficulties are linked to its mad politics. The solution to political disagreement was usually to spend more money, especially on the south, however pointless the purpose.

Government largesse over decades has led to large parts of industry being in state, or even party, hands. IRI, the main state holding, is a fiefdom of the Democrazia Cristiana. ENI, the energy conglomerate, is under the influence of the socialists.

Signor Amato has pledged to put the reform of such moribund structures at the top of his political agenda, and so far he has had a few remarkable successes. One of those was the agreement between the government, employers and unions to banish the *scala mobile* system of wage indexation, which partially pegged wage rises to the rate of inflation, thereby acting as a guarantor of persistently high inflation. Indexation was nowhere near as complete in the 1980s as in the 1970s, but still cemented Italy's already rigid labour market. Signor Amato's main task is to reduce the debt burden, only in



High on ideals: Giuliano Amato, Italy's new prime minister, hopes to deliver economic promises too

part to meet the tough standards for the single European currency set out under the Maastricht agreement.

This year, Italy will spend the equivalent of about one tenth of its national output servicing the national debt. The primary deficit, which excludes interest payments, has been eliminated, so the remaining deficit is the legacy of past profligacy. Substantial wealth transfers from north to south distort the picture. On a regional accounting basis, the north would be in surplus, even allowing for interest payments; the position of the south would be much worse.

Solving Italy's debt problems requires a series of measures, in the short and medium term. The first and most obvious must be ordinary budgetary savings, such as the new government's recently agreed 30,000 billion lire (£4 billion) budget package, made up of higher taxes and spending cuts. The scope for such measures is limited, however, given the government's fragile majority. One of the most useful savings Italy could undertake is to withdraw from prestige projects such as the European fighter aircraft programme. There are several measures

the Italian government could take without having to incur unpopular social spending cuts that could risk politically unacceptable upheavals. One of the most technical but most effective would be to modernise the way deficits are funded.

On this issue, Italy compares unfavourably with Britain. In 1990, only 48 per cent of Italy's debt was issued in medium- to long-term securities, while 27 per cent of the debt was funded by three-month bills, a large proportion by international comparison.

Any short-term rise in interest rates, such as that following the Danish referendum on Maastricht, thus has a direct impact on the deficit. In other words, the German interest rates rise, and the greater the general political uncertainties elsewhere in Europe, the lower is Italy's chance of reducing its budget deficit.

The ERM discipline has also brought advantages. Inflation has fallen substantially over the years, and the final abolition of the *scala mobile* will yield further benefits. This opens an interesting opportunity

for the government's treasury operations. Already, the Italian treasury has been moving towards issuing longer-term securities. Italy could make inroads into its interest burden, although at a considerable risk, by emulating Britain's use of index-linked government securities, which effectively insure investors against inflation while carrying a lower rate of interest than ordinary bonds. In Britain, index-linked government securities account for about 11.7 per cent of sterling-denominated holdings.

The use of such instruments essentially forces governments to pursue a low inflation strategy or else face huge losses.

Warren Oliver, European economist at Warburg, believes the use of index-linked bonds would greatly benefit Italy's credibility in financial markets. "It is the most credible action you can take if you want to emphasise that you have mended your ways. The Americans have never dared consider them. But for the Italians, it would be the ultimate thing to do. It would symbolise a clear break with the past since the implication of failure would be so horren-

dous," he says. While new ways of funding would alleviate the financial squeeze, there exists only one way to remove some of the underlying causes of the difficulties: privatisation.

Italy is one of the few countries of which one can say with confidence that the family silver has definitely not been sold. The state sector accounts for a quarter of fixed investment, according to estimates by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Privatisation would bring in necessary funds to fill the fiscal gap and inject an additional degree of private-sector zest into the economy.

Signor Amato has backed privatisation so strongly that his government's credibility is on the line. The four largest state holdings, IRI, ENI, ENEL, the electricity supply firm, and INA, the insurance group, have been turned into joint stock companies, initially with the government as the largest shareholder.

These four groups employ almost 700,000 staff in their myriad subsidiaries. Under government plans, private-sector participation in the holding companies will be limited to 45 per cent of the equity, but these holding companies are in turn likely to sell entire subsidiaries to reduce their debts, having been promised a free hand by the government. The next task will be to restructure the various holding groups before privatisation through mergers and demergers.

The government made one rather drastic gesture, when it allowed EFIM, one of the heavily indebted state holding companies, to default on its \$4 billion of debts and go into administration, causing a small financial "crisis". With more than 100 subsidiaries, which are now being sold individually, and hence indirectly privatised, EFIM was one of the smaller state holdings and operated in a variety of sectors.

Foreign banks, which were owed about \$2 billion, were none too pleased by the Italian government's decision, and one can only hope EFIM will not serve as a model for privatisation elsewhere in the economy. Although the government guaranteed the continuation of interest payments, the affair could still have reverberations on the credit rating of Italian debt.

The EFIM saga shows that privatisation will be a complicated business. Many vested interests will be at stake, including those of western bankers who regarded lending to Italy's state-run companies as some sort of sovereign risk.

In the end, Signor Amato may still end up like many of his predecessors, high on ideals but unable to deliver. There is, however, a widespread feeling in his country that something has to give if Italy wants to participate on equal terms in Europe's premier economic league. There is nothing better to concentrate the mind than prospect of relegation into the second division.

BUSINESS LETTERS

Pensions regulatory body needed

From Mr Derrick Rowe
Sir, I would like to add to what Jeremy Rowe said (Business Times, August 6) about the Occupational Pensions Board (OPB) and its limited powers to intervene in pension disputes. All of the other potential watchdogs, the DTI, Opa, the Pensions Ombudsman and Imro, suffer from similar constraints. None of these bodies have the remit nor the legal authority to investigate the conduct of trustees and the confusing overlaps serve only to further diminish the limited benefit they may provide.

No one could read Jeremy Rowe's words and then the article in the same issue by Richard Abramson without realising that this article, "Looking for some common sense in the Goode report", is far too complacent. Not only is legislation required but it must be backed by one pensions regulatory body fully empowered to take whatever measures are required to safeguard the interest of scheme members. This article also places heavy reliance on a company's liability to fund deficits as a reason why the company should be entitled to any surplus. However, I am aware of pension deeds which quite specifically exclude this liability!

No doubt the majority of funds are well run but the prospect of a pot of gold will always attract those who choose to prosper by way of financial manipulation rather than hard work. Given the Maxwell experience, it is not common sense that scheme members are looking for but some real protection of their future income.

Yours faithfully,
DERICK ROWE,
109 King Charles Road,
Surrey.

From R.A. Walker
Sir, Mr Richard Abramson claims in his article on the Goode report (Business Times, August 6): "One of the more nonsensical proposals is that a company's auditors should not also audit its pension scheme." I disagree.

Whilst separate auditors in the Maxwell case might not have prevented the pension fraud, I believe there is much to be said for the proposal. Surely it is possible that separate auditors might raise significant questions regarding a firm's pension fund accounts, which might not be the case when the same auditor is responsible for both the company and its pension fund accounts.

Certainly I believe members of occupational pension funds would feel more comfortable in the knowledge that separate auditors were involved.

Yours faithfully,
R.A. WALKER,
69a Highfield Way,
Rickmansworth,
Hertfordshire.

Fighting company directors' pay rises by vote

From Mr Ron Carver
Sir, May I suggest that small investors who, like myself, object to the disproportionately high pay rises awarded to the chairmen and managing directors of public companies, register their protest by voting,

either in person or by proxy, against the re-election of the non-executive directors who are generally responsible for recommending them?

Yours faithfully,
RON CARVER,
Upminster, Essex.

Help for the housing market at no cost to government

From Joseph Egerton
Sir, The flurry of competing proposals to revive the housing market underlines the seriousness of the situation but is unlikely to commend itself to a government struggling to prevent further escalation of the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement. However there are several measures which might help the market without raising the PSBR and these should surely be taken at once.

First, the provision of proper advice for people with arrears has been very successful in reducing the number of repossessions and if every lender implemented a proper programme this would help considerably. Second, the present capital adequacy rules make it difficult for building societies to lend sufficient to enable people whose house values have fallen sharply but whose income has increased to move up market. They also discourage lending on a shared equity scheme. Third, there is a number of regulatory problems which have obstructed mortgage into rent schemes. Fourth, the sharp increase in premiums for mortgage indemnity policies represents an additional cost to new first time buyers and seems hard to justify in terms of the risks posed by current lending. The conduct of insurers in an

oligopolistic market is open to investigation. The junior housing minister, Mr Tony Baldry, has already taken action to encourage counselling. His opposite numbers in the Treasury and DTI might usefully address the other problems which do not involve public spending. This would produce some help for a hard pressed market even though it would clearly be insufficient to produce a dramatic increase in house prices. Yours faithfully,
JOSEPH EGERTON,
Chief Executive,
Economic & Regulatory
Analysts,
9 St James's Place, SW1.

Abbey National's plan has merit

From Mr Peter Heath
Sir, The Abbey National proposal might not be quite as stupid as your Business Comment leader (August 4) infers. If exemption from capital gains tax was removed from owner occupied property, there should be a positive gain to the Inland Revenue's coffers (unless capital gains tax is itself not worth collecting on the grounds that winners broadly equate to losers).

The current losses on property would then have their loss allowable for capital gains tax. It is high time the Inland Revenue stopped the practice of demanding capital gains tax at income tax rates on realised gains, whilst only allowing losses to be carried forward against future realised gains.

Yours faithfully,
PETER W. HEATH,
10 Marina Court Avenue,
Bedhill-on-Sea,
East Sussex.

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Pagni waltzes to top job

ANGLOPHILE Patrick Pagni, for the past two years chief executive of Société Générale Strauss Turnbull, the United Kingdom Eurobond and securities house in which the French bank has a controlling stake, is turning banker again. He has landed Société Générale's top job in London, succeeding Jean Huet as head of Société Générale in the UK and manager of its Gracechurch Street branch. Huet, remaining one step ahead on the corporate ladder, has been transferred to New York as head of Société Générale in America. But Pagni, 43, born in Provence and raised in Paris — has long been groomed as one of Société Générale's high-flyers with postings in New York, Los Angeles, and Hong Kong, and is now being tipped for a top Paris job in four or five years' time. "In French thinking, this new job is really a thumbs up for what he's done in London," says one London colleague. Société Générale's links with Strauss go back to the mid-1980s. It acquired 60 per cent in 1988, the year of Pagni's arrival as an executive director. After a number of key appointments from Warburg, SGST, known as London's "Eurobond powerhouse," has also made great strides in equity research and distribution. "We are not home yet, but we have achieved levels of sales and coverage of institutions with which the parent company is satisfied," Pagni says. True to SG's reputation



"When did you first notice this loss of consumer confidence?"

for encouraging home-grown talent, the new head of SGST in London is to be Paul Tisch, formerly executive director of equities, and with Strauss since 1970.

Lady in waiting

THE Royal Mint, which has just started advertising for a new £60,000-a-year deputy master, or chief executive, reporting to the "master" — or Chancellor of the Exchequer — could end up with a deputy mistress instead. Following closely from calls for a woman to become the next Governor of the Bank of England, there is, it seems, also now a suggestion that the Royal Mint might benefit from a female presence, too. The odds are not impossible. Anthony Garment, the retiring deputy master, was himself a break with tradition being the first non-civil servant to become chief executive. He was previously inaugural managing director

of the newly created free-standing Post Office Patents and a former high-flyer at Procter & Gamble. With the Mint — turnover £80 million — facing fierce competition for overseas business from rivals as far afield as Canada and Korea, another private sector appointment seems likely. As to a woman, a spokesman says, "It would be interesting for us as an equal opportunities employer. But no doubt the government will select the best person for the job."

Wright stuff

EX-MILITARY personnel looking for jobs after the recent swingeing defence cuts can take heart that there is life after the army, if Russell Wright is anything to go by. Wright, 54, has been appointed by Kleinwort Benson Charities to spearhead the marketing of its £250 million fund. His appointment follows 30 years in the Royal Artillery where he rose to be a lieutenant colonel. Awarded the MBE for his work with Nato, Wright also masterminded "Project Albion" when 60,000 servicemen's vehicles were given new registrations in 14 weeks after an IRA campaign in Europe. Far from being "retired" out of the army, Wright — who has spent the past two years working for a Lloyd's underwriter — claims he deliberately opted for a second career. "I have a general management background and I also hope that as an outsider, I can contribute fresh ideas," he says.

CAROL LEONARD

DAEJAN HOLDINGS P.L.C.

The Chairman, Mr B. S. E. Freshwater, reports:

- Satisfactory results despite severe recession
- Reduction in values of investment properties £24.7m (10%)
- Well spread and diverse portfolio increased by new acquisitions of £31.5m

Year ended 31 March	1992	1991
Net Profit After Tax	£10.46m	£10.15m
Dividends Per Share	25.00p	24.00p

Copies of the Report and Accounts are available from:
The Secretary 162 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2H 8HR

LAW TIMES

Legal aid matrimonial cases are under fire while, below, one firm cuts the trauma

Divorce on the cheap

Gavin Laird, Craig, who was not a matrimonial specialist, "I asked him whether I should attend a hearing as it seemed to be about my two children," he says. "He told me it was not and that I had no need to attend. Now I am allowed to see the children only one day a fortnight."

Mr Craig, an estate agent from Oxfordshire, is one of many who feels he was wrongly advised on divorce. Fewer and fewer specialist solicitors will do matrimonial work for legal aid rates of £60 an hour, so more people have to see any solicitor who will have them. A woman threatened by her common law husband telephoned 22 solicitors before finding one to take her on legal aid.

Anthony Gold Lerman & Muirhead, in Streatham, south London, does a lot of legal aid matrimonial work. Mark Harper, a partner, says: "For private work I charge £110 an hour, but for legal aid work I get £60. My partners want me to stop but I am committed to it, not least because my mother sorted out her divorce only because of legal aid."

"This means that I have to take on a lot more work and everything takes longer. We have five partners doing this but we are turning away about 20 cases every week. Maybe outside the South-East there are firms that find the legal aid rate profitable, but fewer and fewer in this area will touch it. "Many of my clients travel for more than an hour to see



Mr Pyke

me because so few firms will do this work. In almost every family dispute, especially during the recession, at least one party qualifies for legal aid, which, roughly speaking, caters for those earning less than £12,000."

Notwithstanding the claims by some lawyers in the South-East that they cannot afford to take on the work, the 200,000 divorces in Britain last year cost £140 million in legal aid. Criminal cases took £175 million.

So much family law work is arising that the best practitioners do not need badly paid legal aid work. The best central London solicitors doing family work charge more than £200 an hour, but compared with lawyers doing corporate work, they consider themselves badly paid.

A suburban solicitor admitted: "We take on this work only if we have the time. We do not refuse on principle. The temptation on these rates is to

cut corners." Some firms use receptionists and other untrained personnel to save money. A side-effect of inexperienced lawyers handling the sensitive area of family law is that clients' tempers are invariably raised.

Mr Harper says: "Many

'Many solicitors think it is simple and send a totally insensitive letter'

solicitors feel family law is simple. It is just like claiming from an insurance company. They send off a totally insensitive letter, which ruins everybody's lives. Instead of lowering the temperature so that the parties can stay on speaking terms for the benefit of the children."

Tom Lloyd, a management

consultant, who was recently divorced, remembers: "My wife's solicitors sent me a claim for the whole of my salary. I found this so stupid, since because of the children I considered it essential to maintain some relationship with my ex-wife, and having nothing to live on would have destroyed that possibility."

A firm that thought it had solved the problem of badly paid legal aid work was Durnford Ford, an eight-office, 18-partner firm on the south coast. The firm did legal aid work on a computerised system. Two solicitors and 14 technicians handled 1,500 cases a year, putting clients through a screen-led questionnaire. This simplified matters so that 200 prepared standard letters could be brought into play. Unfortunately, having spent two years perfecting this system, the firm found that the Legal Aid Board downgraded its £1 million-a-year estimate of fees so much that work

finally became unprofitable. Durnford Ford's computer system and the legal aid work have been taken over by Moore Smith, Richard Smith, the senior partner, who set up the computer system for Durnford Ford, says: "We are a much smaller firm without the overheads of a 250-person firm, so we hope to be able to make this pay. In 70 per cent of cases, divorce is so straightforward that there is no reason for a client to meet a solicitor. All my staff of four legal executives and five paralegals are trained in family law."

The Legal Aid Board takes a long time to pay solicitors, and also takes time over the simple decision. Incoming fees are not accepted, telephones ring for 40 minutes before being answered, and a legal aid application can wait six weeks to be accepted. Meanwhile, a party in a potentially disastrous domestic dispute cannot have the law present for protection.

Mr Harper says: "The Lord Chancellor, Lord Mackay of Clashfern, has said legal aid is for juniors when they start out in the law. I am committed to serving the community, which means that even with ten years' experience I am paid no more than people on their first day."

"Unless good and experienced solicitors can afford to do these cases the legal system is contributing to the emotional hardship of families after any split, which cannot be good for the hundreds of thousands of children involved, let alone the adults."

HUGH THOMPSON

Protect the press in the public interest

THE Divisional Court's decision to fine Channel 4 and Box Productions £75,000 for contempt of court for refusing to disclose their source of information raises important questions about freedom of expression.

Box Productions produced, and Channel 4 broadcast, a programme accusing the Royal Ulster Constabulary of conspiring with loyalist assassination squads. The RUC denies these allegations.

A court order made by a circuit judge under the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act 1989 required the broadcasters to disclose the source, said to be a loyalist sympathiser, so that the allegations could be investigated.

The companies declined to name the source, who had been promised anonymity and whose safety would be endangered. The circuit judge made the order because, applying the statutory criteria, he was satisfied that there were reasonable grounds for believing the information was likely to be of substantial value to an investigation of terrorist activities and that producing it was in the public interest.

In cases arising out of the Vassall inquiry in 1963, it was held that journalists, like priests, doctors and bankers, had no immunity from legal obligations to disclose confidential information to a court. The journalists involved were imprisoned for refusing to disclose their sources.

In 1980, Granada Television was ordered to inform the British Steel Corporation of the identity of a mole who had disclosed confidential documents. Lord Wilberforce pronounced extravagantly: "This case does not touch upon the freedom of the press, even at its periphery."

One consequence of that case was section 10 of the Contempt of Court Act 1981, which prohibits courts from requiring a person to disclose the source of information in a publication for which he is responsible unless the court is satisfied that "disclosure is necessary in the interests of justice or national security or for the prevention of disorder or crime".

Courts have narrowly applied section 10 in a number of subsequent cases. In 1984, The Guardian was forced to disclose the document that revealed that Sarah Tisdall, a civil servant, had leaked information about the delivery of cruise missiles to RAF Greenham Common.

In 1987, Jeremy Warner, a financial journalist, was ordered by the House of Lords to disclose his source for leaks of price-sensitive information. He declined to do so, and was fined £20,000.

In 1990, the House of Lords held that section 10 gave no protection to William Goodwin, a journalist on The Engineer, who

refused to comply with a court order to disclose the source of commercially sensitive information that had been leaked to him about a certain company. As a result he was fined £5,000.

Journalists cannot expect absolute immunity from orders requiring the disclosure of their sources. There may, on occasions, be higher public interests to be served. It must be for the courts, and not journalists, to balance the competing interests.

What journalists are entitled to expect, but do not always receive, from English courts is recognition of the strength of the public interest in protecting the confidentiality of sources. The argument is simple but compelling.

A free society depends on the flow of information to the public so that corruption and inefficiency are revealed and remedied.

The press cannot perform this important function unless it can gather news. News-gathering will be impeded if sources have to be revealed. Potential sources will not divulge information and reporters, concerned about the consequences, will be deterred from investigating and publishing. A more ignorant society results, and those in power are less subject to independent and critical scrutiny. Occasional abuse by the press of its freedoms does not make these principles less important.

The Divisional Court had no option but to conclude that Channel 4 was in contempt. An order had been made by the circuit judge, but had not been obeyed. It was not for the Divisional Court, on a contempt application, to consider whether the order should have been made in the first place. It is, however, unfortunate that the Divisional Court did not take the opportunity to emphasise that there is a real public interest in the confidentiality of sources, and that circuit judges should have this firmly in mind when balancing the arguments for and against making orders of this type.

The regrettable consequence of this hard case is likely to be less investigative journalism in Northern Ireland, where the media are already in the front line of a battle to inform society of what is being done in our name.

Cynical journalists — there are a few — are also entitled to observe how curious it is that, while English law is so slow to recognise the confidentiality of what is told to journalists, because of the importance of fighting serious crime, the 1989 Terrorism Act prevents courts from making orders compelling the disclosure of the contents of discussions with a lawyer.

● The author is a practising barrister and a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.



DAVID PANNICK QC

Easing emotional pressures

Wavering divorce clients waste their own money and the time of everybody else connected with their case. Now the London law firm of Margaret Bennett, which specialises in divorce, has tackled the problem by taking on a woman who is thought to be the first in-house crisis counsellor in a solicitor's firm.

The counsellor's task is to help to clarify the minds of potential divorcees before detailed legal negotiations start in earnest. Margaret Bennett says the move has already paid dividends by helping to dispel divorce myths and to smooth over any emotional traumas. The result is that client and solicitor can get down to business without any blurring of issues.

Patricia Harris, the counsellor who is starting the approach, is a psychiatric

social worker. She says: "Some clients call me a therapist, but what I do is not to be regarded as a long-term therapeutic relationship. Sessions last an hour and mostly I see clients two or three times."

"The aim is to help to clarify their intentions. There is usually a lot of confusion in people's minds. I try to cut through that, but it does not make for good decision-making. The goal is to help clients to make their own clear decisions based on the legal advice they are ultimately given by a solicitor."

"Initially, a lot of clients are unable to decide what they really want. Their emotions are ruling their heads. They often want two completely different things. From the

solicitor's point of view, this is the worst possible scenario. Such clients seldom give consistent instructions."

"Feelings of hurt and anger, fear and despair, are very understandable, but when someone is facing divorce, a clear head is needed to make important decisions. I try to help a client to keep control of emotional turmoil."

"Where do I start? The first questions I always ask clients are: 'Why now? Why not last year? Why not next year? What was the last straw?'"

"It is necessary to identify the triggers that have driven clients towards divorce. Then I have to try to analyse the consequences if they go through with a divorce. Some pull back after talking to me.

But at least they make a decision.

"Another problem is dispelling the fantasy of many that divorce proceedings will entail their going before a judge in a wig and gown who will decide who the guilty party is. It is difficult convincing people that this is not what happens — to persuade them to accept reality and not to believe in judicial miracles."

"These are the sort of goals I aim for. And when they have been achieved, there is no doubt that the legal negotiations can then be conducted on far more businesslike terms than is otherwise the case. I firmly believe that there is a place for more of this sort of counselling in the future."

It can reduce the emotional traumas of divorce, and cut legal costs and time."

ROGER PEARSON



Decisions: Patricia Harris

Delay for the Bar

WHY are the Lord Chancellor and the other senior judges taking so long to decide whether to uphold a challenge to the Bar's ban on employed barristers being allowed advocacy rights?

The matter is contentious because if the ban is lifted it paves the way for crown prosecutors (barristers and solicitors) to move into the crown court. Under the Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 it takes only one of the senior judges to disapprove the ban, and it goes.

There is a strong suspicion that Lord Taylor, the new Lord Chief Justice, favours retaining the ban. It looks as though Lord Mackay of Clashfern, the Lord Chancellor, is waiting for support from the new Master of the Rolls, tipped to be Lord Justice Engham, who favours opening up rights of audience.

Meanwhile, John Taylor, a junior Home Office minister, has made his position clear. He said recently that "liberalising" the rights of audience was the "inevitable consequence" of the 1990 Act and that the legislation was not introduced "in the belief that this [liberalising] would not happen".

Getting equal TWO firms that act largely for trade unions, Robin Thompson & Partners and Brian Thompson & Partners, have published a booklet entitled *Women at Work*. The booklet focuses on the issues of equal pay, sexual harassment, repetitive strain injury and maternity rights. On maternity rights, it accuses Britain of trying to wriggle out of the improved conditions required under a European Commission directive that

INNS AND OUTS

should be in force by 1994. The directive would remove the requirement of two years' employment to qualify for maternity leave.

Allison Eddy, a partner at Robin Thompson & Partners, says: "Employers should see these, and other issues affecting women, as central to their employment policies. The law is only a basis but by insisting on our rights we can gradually get things improved."

The press release possibly reflects the views of many women that bringing any action against an employer

is a daunting task. It reports on a equal value claims. Since the equal value amendment to the Equal Pay Act 1984, there have been 6,443 claims, involving 490 employers. More than half the 1991 claims were against four of the Northern Ireland health boards, where domestic staff claim equal pay with porters. Claims were made against a further 41 employers during the year. Cases are taking on average just under 17 months from the instruction of an independent expert to the final tribunal decision.

Independent experts have been used in just over 100 cases since 1984 and have found, for example, that the work of typists employed by Lloyds Bank is of equal value to the work of messengers but that the work of a matron employed by the Church Army is not equal to that of a principal care assistant.

The outcome is now awaited of the Court of Appeal's referral to the European Court of Justice of the case of *Endersby* against Frenchay Health Authority, involving a claim that the work of speech therapists is equal to that of pharmacists. The Review believes that the European court's decision will have an important influence on the development of equal value law in the UK.

Aid to Russia

WHITE & Case has been chosen to advise the Russian State Property Company on the privatisation of Russia's business enterprises. The American law firm won the contract as part of a consortium that includes Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu International and Credit Commercial de France. The work they do for the impoverished Russians

will be financed by donor institutions, including the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the World Bank and the European Commission.

The contract may yet prove a poisoned chalice as foreign legal advisers increasingly find that foreign investors are giving up the unequal struggle with Russia's weak economy, aggressive tax policy and political instability.

School ties

THE influence of schooling on the careers of the famous is explored in a new book this month, *Old School Ties*, by Tim Devlin and Hywel Williams. The book lists 1,400 schools attended by more than 3,000 famous people, and concludes that the influence of a single teacher is much more important than the old school tie.

Among the famous lawyers, Helena Kennedy QC (Holyrood Senior Secondary School, Glasgow) reminisces that she was the only girl in her year to do Greek because she wanted "to do things that other people do not do". It was one of the reasons she chose the law. She adds: "The law for most working-class kids seems a world apart — outside of the possible... My mother was fearful about me going to London. My dad was actually quite proud of me. But my education drew me away from home..."

Lord Denning (Andover Grammar School) says that going to grammar school was not an advantage. He says: "In those days it would have been a help to go to Eton, Winchester or Harrow. They did not like grammar schools much at university... But I was highly ambitious and ambition will get you anywhere."

● *Old School Ties* (Sinclair Stevenson, £16.95)

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Vacancies in the U.K. continue to flow in rapidly and for further details about these, please contact either Daniel Lewis or Penny Capps on 071 583 0232.

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TUESDAY AUGUST 11 1992

Lesser lights miss out in £3 million deal

An elite bloc out to dominate Premier league

BY PETER BALL

FOUR days before it has even seen a ball kicked in earnest, the Premier League is in disarray, the old bitter divisions which bedevilled the Football League resurfacing in damaging fashion. Seven clubs have broken ranks to form their own exclusive grouping, the Platinum Club, concluding a separate £3 million advertising and sponsorship package with Dornia.

The seven clubs, Arsenal, Liverpool, Manchester United, Everton, Leeds, Aston Villa and Nottingham Forest, with an eighth in the process of being recruited, will have the Adtime revolving boards installed at their grounds. Advertisers are offered a guaranteed four minutes exposure at 32 live televised matches, 20 on BSkyB and 12 on terrestrial TV.

The deal was announced in last week's trade press, only days after Liverpool, Arsenal and Nottingham Forest blocked a vote on a League sponsorship package from Bass worth £9.5 million. Some of the excluded clubs are now trying to resuscitate the Bass deal, but this unilateral action throws the Premier League's commitment to a group marketing strategy into

considerable doubt, while accusations of bad faith reverberate, recalling the worst days of the Football League. "It's horrendous, an absolute shambles," Ian Stott, the usually diplomatic chairman of Oldham, said yesterday. Ron Noades, of Crystal Palace, was predictably even more scathing. "I cannot believe that a group have got together to do something detrimental to the rest of the clubs in the Premier League. The breakaway was clearly on the basis that we had centralised selling of sponsorship and advertising. The idea that they voted against the Bass deal and then went up to another room in the same hotel and signed up as an exclusive group is beyond belief. The ethics of some of the big clubs are just beyond me."

Significantly the seven are the old Big Five, minus Tottenham, with Leeds, Aston Villa and Nottingham Forest added. Even more significantly they are recruiting an eighth. Mike Coley, the managing director of Dornia UK, the British arm of the Spanish company, insisted that this was for practical reasons, being the highest number that Dornia could service on a

regular basis. The clubs, however, are aware that an eighth member would enable the platinum set to block any votes in the Premier League which require a two-thirds majority. "Eight clubs can block any deal the Premier League wants to do," Noades said. With Sheffield Wednesday declining the invitation, it is believed that an approach is being made after all to Tottenham, who were originally left out for ignoring the Big Five whip over the new television contract, casting the decisive vote in favour of the BSkyB deal.

As always in football, money is a major component in the conflict, but there seems little doubt that after all the honed words committing the clubs to a democratic future, some of the major clubs still see themselves as being more equal than others, and the power struggle which destroyed the integrity of the Football League has just been transferred to a new arena.

There is little doubt that Arsenal, whose vice-chairman David Dein was a prime mover in the ITV contract with the Football League in 1988, which occasioned so much bitterness, are once again playing a major role after losing out in this year's TV contract. The events have even made some clubs question whether the Premier League's structure, with all decisions taken at meetings of the 22 clubs, can survive.

There are suggestions that Luccombe, another interested sponsor, will make a proposal to the remaining fourteen clubs, but that so far has not happened. It is clear however that the next Premier League meeting will be a lively one.

"I am proposing that if a group does a deal in concert to the detriment of the rest of the league, any monies from that deal should be regarded as Premier League income and distributed equally among all 22 clubs," Noades said. That is likely to be as popular as suggestions that some form of management committee, the *bete noir* of the big clubs during the Football League days, should be revived.

Harford finds three top clubs in pursuit

THE dearth of available talent within English football was underlined again yesterday when Mick Harford, Luton Town's veteran forward, found himself pursued by a posse of leading Premier League clubs (see Ross writes).

After a day of frantic negotiations, the 33-year-old, who made two appearances for the England international senior side in the late 1980s was left pondering a move to one of three clubs, Everton, Chelsea or Coventry City.

All three agreed a fee of £300,000 with Luton yesterday but said he was unwilling to meet an asking price of £1 million.

England to play Spain at new venue

THE England football team will break new ground on the visit to Spain next month. The international on September 9 will be played in Santander, on the ground of the Spanish second division club, Racing, a venue not previously used in England's eight visits. Seven of these were played in Madrid, the other one in Barcelona.

The venue for the under-21 international between the countries on September 8 has yet to be decided.

The Newcastle United central defender, Kevin Scott,

stripped of the captaincy by Kevin Keegan, the manager, has agreed a new three-year contract with the club.

Patrick Thistle have agreed to pay Celtic £100,000 for Gerry Britton and they stand to cash in on any subsequent transfer, earning a percentage of another fee.

The Berwick Rangers coach, Jimmy Crease, has been appointed manager of the Scottish second division club. Crease, a former Berwick player and leading Scottish junior coach, takes over from the former Newcastle United

player, John Anderson, who resigned last month after he had spent only eight weeks in the job.

Crease has appointed the former Meadowbank Thistle player, Tommy Hendry, as his assistant.

Millwall yesterday completed the signing of the former Luton midfielder player, Paul Hodge, on a free transfer. The Millwall manager, Mick McCarthy, said: "Paul has been with us a few weeks now on trial and we like what we have seen of him in matches."

Bournemouth, the second division club, have signed a one-year £30,000 sponsorship deal with the consumer magazine, Exchange and Mart.



Taking stock: McMahon prepares to bowl for Hong Kong against Thailand

English pair scrapes in

BY GORDON ALLAN

TONY Alcock and John Ottaway were given an unexpectedly difficult match by Prakhon Nirodhanon and S. Viswanath, of Royal Bangkok, the only club in Thailand, in the sixth round of the Woolwich world championship pairs at Worthing yesterday.

The Englishman won 22-13, a score that disguises the fact that the Thai traded shot-for-shot for much of the time and were only three down at 17 ends. A count of five to England on the last end put a misleading complexion on the result.

England, unbeaten in five

games, stand third on shots difference in their section behind Steve Adamson and Sammy Allen, of Ireland, and Israel. The Irish had a 30-6 win over Swaziland. In the other group, Botswana are at the top, having played one match more than their nearest rivals, Australia.

Scotland are fourth, Richard Corrie and Alex Marshall, having beaten the islanders from Guernsey, 35-7. The holders, Rowan Bracey and Peter Belliss, of New Zealand, lie further back in sixth position.

South Africa, skipped by Kevin Campbell, and Israel, skipped by Cecil Bransky, head their respective sections

WOOLWICH WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP: Pairs Section A: Fifth round: Australia vs India, 39-11; Botswana drew with Cook Islands, 18-15; Jersey (J. Le Marquand and M. Coudry), 19-17; New Zealand vs Kenya, 26-13; Scotland vs Costa and A. Marshall vs United States, 25-17; Wales (J. Weeks and W. Thomas) vs Guernsey (A. Welch and M. Keogh), 25-12. Sixth round: Botswana vs India, 25-16; Fiji vs United States, 23-12; Hong Kong vs Jersey, 23-21; New Zealand vs Japan, 36-4; Scotland vs Guernsey, 36-7; Wales vs Kenya, 26-17. Section B: Fifth round: Canada vs Argentina, 36-11; Ireland vs Adornon and S. Allen vs Singapore, 36-4; Israel vs Zambia, 31-21; Namibia vs Norfolk Island, 25-14; Papua New Guinea vs Switzerland, 22-15; Zimbabwe vs South Africa, 22-21. Sixth round: England vs Thailand, 22-13; Ireland vs Switzerland, 30-6; Israel vs Argentina, 36-12; South Africa vs Namibia, 22-16; Zimbabwe vs Singapore, 20-15. Triples Section A: Fifth round: Australia vs Botswana, 19-5; Namibia vs Fiji, 20-17; Hong Kong vs Thailand, 32-6; New Zealand vs Guernsey (M. Smith, K. Major and P. Trovati), 22-5; South Africa vs Zimbabwe, 15-13; Switzerland drew with United States, 18-18. Sixth round: England vs Guernsey, 24-6; United States vs Fiji, 20-10; Hong Kong vs Namibia, 25-12; New Zealand vs Japan, 36-6; South Africa vs Botswana, 18-14; Zimbabwe vs Zimbabwe, 15-12. Section B: Fifth round: Ireland (J. Deakin, J. McCusker and E. Parkes) vs Cook Islands, 25-8; Israel vs Singapore, 21-14; Canada vs Jersey (A. Syme, F. Hamby and A. Carruth), 22-7; Kenya vs Papua New Guinea, 21-10; Scotland (G. Robertson, W. Wood and A. Sharp) vs Argentina, 30-18; Wales (S. Price and S. White) vs Norfolk Island, 22-14. Sixth round: Israel vs Cook Islands, 21-11.

Skulduggery is no substitute for sheer skill

BY ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

WASIM Akram and Waqar Younis are among the few great fast bowlers of their generation. Yet, on what should have been their day of glory, their image suffered greatly of immensity and open abuse.

Their status as heroes without honour stems from the suspicion, ruthlessly promoted by yesterday's tabloid press, that because they swing the ball faster and later than anyone alive, they must be doing something reprehensible and unprecedented to the sacrosanct surface of the ball.

This is not a new prejudice in British sport, but it is no more worthy than jealous claims that all Jimmy Greaves' goals were offside, or that Martin Pipe could not train a winner without administering some mysterious substance to his horses. The success of Wasim and Waqar is attributable to one thing. They are the best in their field.

I would not venture to suggest that either man is an angel when it comes to cossetting the match ball. Nor would I begin to name the bowlers, long since retired from the game, who now freely confess that they used their finger and thumb to good effect when they were walking back to their mark.

This summer, however, umpires have been under instructions to scrutinise the match ball more often than ever before. Apart from one incident at Taunton in May, which contributed significantly to the Pakistanis' recent behaviour during the Old Trafford Test match, not one

umpire has raised an official question when they have been in the field.

Crick balls have always been mistreated by swing bowlers. The methods are many and various, from roughing up one side while keeping the other moist, shiny and thereby heavier, to lifting the seam or quarter-seam. The motive is always the same but the effect depends upon the relative skill of the bowler.

Micky Stewart, the England team manager, has perhaps never mastered the art of dealing succinctly with the press. So when, on Sunday, he failed to give an unqualified endorsement of the Pakistanis' methods, the inference was drawn that he believed them guilty of some heinous crime. In fact, Stewart's most significant sentence was largely lost on his headline-hungry audience. "They have both played a lot of domestic cricket in England," he said, "and if you think there is something new about their method, you are not very bright."

Stewart has been around long enough to acknowledge the overriding fact of this melodrama. He may know how Wasim and Waqar make the ball swing; every English bowler must know, and some will have tried to imitate. Not one of them, however, is remotely of the same quality as either Pakistani. For that, and no other reason, England were beaten this summer.

□ Pakistan have added Ijaz Ahmed to their squad for the three remaining Test matches at Trent Bridge on August 20.

Lewis anxious to live up to hype

FROM SRIKUMAR SEN IN ATLANTIC CITY

LENNOX Lewis wants to put on the style tonight. With a world title bout just two contests away, it is time to start looking the part of the world No. 2.

For 16 months Lewis has been looking for the classical left that sent the unbeaten Gary Mason into retirement. He is hoping he can find it when he meets Mike Dixon, of Tennessee, at Harrah's Casino here and put on a show to wipe out the memory of so many scabbling bulls in which he tried to go for a clean knockout but succeeded only in bundling them out untidily.

"The Mason fight gave me the most satisfaction," Lewis said yesterday. "It is very important to look good again. I am more relaxed these days and I am going back to my natural style, that is, boxing."

"I have been working on my combinations and I am sure they will come across cleaner and sharper. I want everybody to be impressed by me and to believe the hype."

His trainer, Pepe Correa, who has had Lewis working for the last two months in Sugar Ray Leonard's gym in Maryland, wants him to take his time in setting up his man. Correa said: "I want him to box, box and box. I would like to see him go ten rounds. One

or two rounds don't do any good. In the knockout cup we'll take it, but ten rounds of good boxing is beautiful."

But Correa's hopes may not be realised, as styles make fights. Lewis could once again be frustrated, for Dixon is not the kind of incoming fighter that makes boxers look good. He has a good chin, is cagey and a survivor. He has been floored four times in his 15 contests but has always managed to finish on his feet.

"That, together with the fact that Donovan 'Razor' Ruddock, Lewis's next opponent, in London on October 31, will be at ringside with his trainer, Floyd Patterson, could cramp the British champion's style. "I am glad they are coming. They will learn a couple of things," Lewis said petulantly, a little surprised to hear that Ruddock was in town.

But should Lewis find himself struggling to catch up with Dixon, he could become over-anxious and the customers could be in for a tedious 40 minutes. However, since the purpose of this bout tonight is to prepare for the eliminator with Ruddock, a boxing contest could prove a blessing for Lewis. Since Lewis boxes to the level of competition, the world No. 1 could be in for a surprise on October 31.

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England likely to turn to Gattling and company

BY ALAN LEE
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

THE cold, clear light of the morning after brought no consolation for those who run England's cricket team, only a dull headache and a few home truths. There is no shame for them in having lost a series to a palpably superior side but there is a sense of desolation in the way it exposed so many individual limitations.

On the third unscheduled free day of the summer, the profit and loss columns made painful reading. We are not talking money here, because even with their propensity for landing the knockout blow inside the distance, Pakistan have been good box-office. We are talking of England players who have either progressed or regressed this summer, and the latter group win by a landslide.

One of the more uncomfortable moments of the post-match press conferences at the Oval on Sunday was uncon-

nected with the witch-bunt about ball doctoring. As questions go, it was a gentle volley to the England captain, yet he met it with such uncertainty that it was possible to detect the clatter of stumps behind him.

"What do you regard as the pluses for your side from this series, Graham?" Innocuous enough, surely, but Gooch shifted in his chair, pushed back his hair in that idiosyncratic way and finally broke the silence by muttering something unconvincing about the return of Michael Atherton and the development of Ian Salisbury.

This requires examination. Atherton does give adhesion to the top order but the suspicion persists that he has not, in racing parlance, "trained on", his last century being scored ten Tests ago. Salisbury's wrist-spin is a welcome delight but, in the second of his two appearances this summer, his figures were nought for 184. There is not a

lot there to command distinctions in the captain's end-of-term report but the fact that this was all Gooch could come up with is revealing.

If, when the series began, Gooch had been asked for the pluses he hoped to witness, he would have nominated the emergence of Hick and Ramprakash as prolific Test batsmen and of Lewis as a



Broad: may return

genuine all-rounder. He would also have looked to the established class acts — Smith, Russell, DeFreitas and Tufnell — as a dependable nucleus.

In every individual facet of this, Gooch has been disappointed. The sum of the season's activity, a 2-1 defeat which would have been reversed but for Pakistan's ninth-wicket pair at Lord's, carries no dishonour, but the detailed contributions are cause for dismay.

Hick, Ramprakash and Lewis have been regarded as the guaranteed future. All are in their early twenties and the confident notion was that they would spend the next decade batting at three, four and six for England, with Lewis additionally being one of the main seam bowlers. These lofty ideas must now be revised.

Only Lewis saw the series out and his figures will embarrass him. His 114 runs came at an average of 16 and his 12 wickets cost 45 runs apiece. Hick managed 98 runs in five

innings before being spared further anguish and Ramprakash, picked for the first Test and the last two, fared even worse with 31 in five.

Figures can sometimes be cruelly deceptive but, with the best will in the world, it is hard to dispute the authenticity of this sorry batch. Hick is technically deficient and barren of confidence, though a winter on Indian pitches may yet cure that. Ramprakash, who spent so long blocking out the West Indies last summer that he has forgotten what it is to play an innings, may not get the chance. Lewis has explosive ability with bat and ball but there is a limit on how long we can wait for it to be applied when it matters.

Smith's series average was 44, and he played admirably in a lost cause at the Oval, but he had spent his six previous innings, scrunching together 103 runs and looking a shadow of his forthright self. Russell, though never quite at his

best, was once more the victim of the inadequacies of others when left out of the last two Tests, while DeFreitas and Tufnell, England's two outstanding bowlers of the preceding 12 months, were restricted by injury and illness to two Tests and one, respectively.

The series has also almost certainly terminated the Test careers of Botham, Lamb and Fringle, while Gower's, although contentiously revived, continues to exist precariously. All of this may seem depressing but there is one group of Englishmen who will be feeling rather smug about it. Their names include Gattling, Broad, Embrey and Wells. Unavailable since taking the knickerbockers two years ago, they can and will be considered when Gooch and fellow selectors choose the combination for this winter's tour. The way things are, all four of the above named may find they have profited from the disillusionments of this summer.

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PARENTS p5

Groucho
Marx: letters
to his
daughter

SCIENCE p7

Catch a
falling star:
meteorite man
strikes gold



LIFE & TIMES

TUESDAY AUGUST 11 1992

Can anyone upstage Pavarotti?

The Italian is unique: will his brand of genius ever happen again? Opera superstars of tomorrow, Rodney Milnes believes, will be a different breed

Is there life after Pavarotti? This shorthand question greatly exercises the chattering classes nowadays. Pavarotti in the Park, the World Cup's "Nessun dorma", the Three Tenors in Rome, the opening ceremony at the Barcelona Olympics with five star singers mouthing operatic highlights — all this plus the best-selling videos and CDs attached to them is currently part of our way of life and very big business indeed.

Not all those on stage in Barcelona were in the first flush of youth. So what is going to happen when, with Melba-like reluctance, they retire? Who are their natural successors? Are there any? Is there life after Pavarotti?

First define your terms. Pavarotti is unique. He is the only opera singer who can automatically sell out an arena concert. His nearest rival, José Carreras, is a special case: his devoted following is inspired as much by his heroic victory over leukaemia as by his singing. Both have their peers — Domingo, Caballé, Berganza, to name just those at Barcelona — but Pavarotti is something special, an earth spirit who has captured the world's imagination in a way no tenor has since Caruso.

In the 1920s people doubtless asked if there was life after Caruso, and along came Gigli. After the war came Corelli, Bjorling, Domingo, after Ponselle came Tebaldi, Callas, Sutherland and Caballé after Flagstad came Nilsson. But the parallel is not quite exact. There were no mass media in Caruso's day, and in truth Pavarotti has captured the world's imagination rather after the manner of the tenor who played Caruso in the Hollywood biopic — Mario Lanza.

And what is life? That is more complicated. The Pavarotti phenomenon has widened a post-Lanza gap between opera-people and the public at large. Opera-people may (but shouldn't) sneer at Pavarotti, or maintain that tenors of the same vocal type, Bergonzi, say, or Kraus, are more interesting and musical singers, tenors whose careers have lasted 40 years and more because they knew what they could sing and confined themselves to singing it. Neither, for example, would ever have dreamed of singing Otello (Kraus doesn't even sing Puccini); Pavarotti, because of what his managers perceive as the demands of the public, has done so. But sneer not at an artist who by indefinable quality of tone and phrase, without either Mick Jagger's pelvis or Arnold Schwarzenegger's chest, has struck a chord in the public soul.

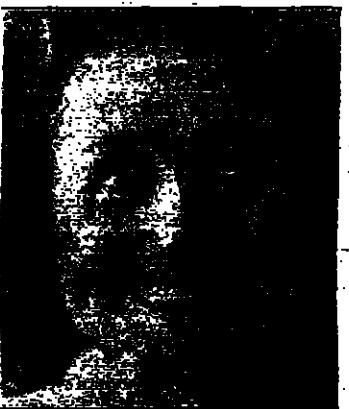
Is there an audience crossover from Hyde Park and Wembley Arena to what opera-people would deem legitimate opera? I suspect not: arena audiences are put off by Covent Garden prices and would be fazed by the green blood, trenchcoats and chainsaws they might encounter at the Coliseum. They are in it for Barbara Cartland-style romance, are likely to be blissfully unaware of the creepy sadomasochistic setting of "Nessun dorma", and probably stick to lollipop opera galas at the Albert Hall and Phantom of the Opera.

But the pressures exerted by the arena experience have their effect on the next generation of singers.

Pavarotti only really happened when he was taken up by an expert New York PR agency moving into artists' management. And management is what it is all about for promising singers. This is where opera-people's hackles rise: singers' agents, who now prefer to be called artists' managers, are seen as ruthless flesh-mERCHANTS, in it for the money, eager only for next week's percentage cheque and let the long term go hang.

There are people like that in the business, but there are also extremely responsible, far-sighted agents who plan their clients' careers with care and foresight. And they are needed, because opera house managements can be ruthless and exploitative.

Consider the case of a young



Larger than life: Luciano Pavarotti, bottom right, and two of opera's other stars of today, Plácido Domingo and Dame Joan Sutherland

British lyric soprano who was summoned to audition for a new production of *Traviata* by a major European opera house who should have known better; had she got the part (she didn't), she wouldn't have been singing in five years time. They didn't care; they would have had their five-minute sensation, and that was enough. Such stories make one wonder, as do memories of recklessly cast young singers who have sunk without trace. Managements need tenors to sing the Puccini roles that set their box-office tills ringing, and they aren't fussy about how they get them. There are sharks in them, there waters.

And Puccini, and by extension Wagner and late Verdi, is basically what the public at large wants, though some opera-people see this as a 50-year aberration in the history of opera, a period when noise counted above vocal artistry. Many young singers today realise that there are rewarding careers to be made in Baroque opera and bel canto, in Handel, Mozart, Rameau, Bellini and Rossini, so why

should they risk their voices belting out Puccini week after week? Take Chris Merritt, who has almost single-handedly brought the heroic Rossini operas back into the repertoire, operas that were trained to scream Puccini can't begin to manage. When Merritt sang French-period Verdi at La Scala to an audience with mistaken expectations they booed him for his pains. Again, this is where opera-people and the public part company.

The general public might not have responded, had they been there, to the Covent Garden revival of Bellini's *Puritani* in the summer. This was a happy conjuncture of three fine artists. First June Anderson, a soprano with a phenomenal technique and the potential heir to Sutherland, but one who had never quite "clicked"; there seemed something icy, even remote about her technical perfection.

But here she was working with a gifted young Italian conductor, Daniele Gatti, whom she trusted and who coaxed the performance of a lifetime out of her, and with an equally gifted young tenor,

Giuseppe Sabbatini, who sang one of those treacherous, high-lying bel canto roles with an unshowy stylishness and ease that none of the Three Tenors, frankly, could have approached. A feast day for opera-people, then, emphasising that in the end it is the conductor who counts, but neither showy nor sensational enough for the public at large.

Given the shark-infested waters, the first reaction of opera-people on hearing exceptional young singers is to keep quiet about them. But they are there, even if perception of them varies sharply. Take the Cardiff Singer of the World competition, an exploitative event viewed by many opera-people with the deepest suspicion. In 1989 Dmitry Hvorostovsky won it; many opera people thought Bryn Terfel should have. But at the time Hvorostovsky was admired by gushing television commentators as a marketable "package", which inspired gloomy thoughts as well as thin-lipped smiles from those familiar with theatrical argot.

And packaged he has been, with mean, moody and magnificent photographs adorning his less than remarkable CDs and videos. He too appeared in the Royal Opera *Puritani*, not to best advantage, and is now taking on some pretty dotty roles. Terfel, meanwhile, has gone from strength to strength, is also being offered dotty roles — Wotan, if you please — and with good sense is turning them down.

Will Roberto Alagna, the prodigiously gifted Franco-Sicilian tenor still in his 20s, last the course? One prays so, but he may not if he settles for screaming Puccini in outsize American theatres, which is what may be demanded of him. (All opera houses built since the 1870s,

incidentally, are much too big.) Or the equally young Cecilia Bartoli, who with her stunning technique and deliciously sunny personality has captivated opera-people and the general public alike? She is besieged by managements offering her Carmen, and she has said she won't sing it until she is over 40 — good for her. She has too much to bring to Rossini, Mozart and Handel to risk damaging that God-given instrument.

On the Wagner and late-Verdi/Puccini fronts things are less promising. It is virtually impossible to cast *Forza del destino* and *Ballo in maschera* internationally nowadays, certainly the heroic soprano and baritone roles. The Canadian tenor Richard Margison is so promising that it is, again, tempting to keep quiet about him, so that he can continue singing Verdi in reasonably sized theatres out of public earshot.

His compatriot Ben Heppner is the great white hope for Wagner, and he must be nearing the awful decision of whether to concentrate on *Meistersinger* or Mozart, which is what he is currently singing in Salzburg.

The only Brünnhilde today is Anne Evans, who doesn't make quite enough noise really to satisfy the Germans and isn't primadonna-ish enough for the public, but she's as scrupulously musical a Wagnerian as you could hope to meet. So let's keep quiet about her and meanwhile try and work out why she should be good enough for Bayreuth but not, apparently, for Covent Garden.

So one aspect of life after Pavarotti could be a change of emphasis in the repertoire. If heroic

voices are not emerging as a matter of course — and they aren't — and if young singers are showing an inclination and preference for earlier, pre-18th-century music, then opera managements should acknowledge that there is life before Puccini and investigate pre-Wagnerian, pre-Verdian opera: the bel canto repertoire, French opera, and the inexhaustible riches of Handelian opera seria and Gluck. They could carry the public with them.

As for the pressures on emerging talent, pressures with the danger of making careers shorter — and shorter, one can only rely — albeit nervously — on the common sense of singers and the probity of their managers, praying that both will see further ahead than the next huge cheque. It would be nice if the public at large could be helped to discover that there is more to opera than "Nessun dorma", and if Unesco could forbid the construction of any new opera house seating more than 1,500.

Small is beautiful: some of the best opera I have heard over the past two years has been in a converted fire station somewhere near the Arctic circle seating 500, and I'm keeping jolly quiet about it until the circumstances that give birth to it are reproduced all over the operatic world.

But in the end, I'm not convinced that there will be another Pavarotti in our lifetime, and it will save everyone a lot of headache if we stop trying to create one. There will be life after Pavarotti: we must just make it a little saner and a little quieter.

Domingo's new role, page 3

TOMORROW

Arts: why do soap operas feel they have to drag "issues" in?

Making up your mind about decisions

What a week: bossed around, badgered up hill and down dale, told when to come and go, advised what to wear, how to sit, where to place my hands and feet. It was bliss: the perfect therapeutic break, the ideal holiday.

I spent last week at a riding school in Northumberland, being taught how to improve my seat and to give with my hands at the decisive moment of a horse's jump. The full meaning of those terms and all the sublime artistry they involve will be described elsewhere (in my occasional series for *The Times* informally known as *The Absolutely Past-it Beginner's Guide to Activities You Should Have Mastered by the Age of 16*, alternatively entitled *It's Never Too Late to Break Your Neck*). In this space, I just want to carry on a little about the discovery, new to me, that the best release from the cares and toils of this mid-life grind is to place yourself for a spell in the authority of an instructor who is going to tell you what to do and make right certain that you learn something. The perfect holiday for the middle-aged may feel, therefore, something like going back to school.

The young will not believe this. We all spent the first 25 years of our lives longing for those few weeks of

the summer when we might be free to do whatever takes our fancy, especially if it is nothing. We yearn for release from the powers of others who may require our attendance, our attention and our obedience. Only in those weeks of freedom do we feel released to be truly ourselves, as we may not be during the rest of the year. For the secretary, the footballer, the soldier, the piece-rate worker on an assembly line and the shop assistant, the essential definition of a holiday is that nobody, for once, is going to tell you what to do.

By the time you are pushing 50, particularly if you are self-employed, a business executive or in charge of your own company, you have had more than enough of deciding what you and others should do: you get plenty of that every minute of every working day of the year and you don't usually call it freedom. For those people, the essential definition of a holiday is that somebody other than themselves might make a decision for once, carry it out and be responsible for the consequences. I now find myself among the number of those people. I would rather stay at work for the rest of my life than submit to another holiday where the dominant characteristic is uncertainty and the most often repeated line of

MID LIFE
Neil Lyndon on how to choose the perfect holiday



conversations go like this: "Where do you fancy going for lunch?"

"I don't know, anywhere. You choose."

"I wish you'd express a preference."

"But I am happy to do whatever you like." (Sighs.)

(Later): "Where would you like to go to dinner?"

"I don't know. Where would you like to go?"

"Anywhere. I don't mind. I wish you'd say."

"I wish you'd stop badgering me. This is supposed to be a holiday."

(The moment when you hear "this is supposed to be a holiday..." is the moment to start checking timetables for early return trips home. If you hear it said before you leave home, don't go.)

The disappointment of the holiday which isn't supposed to be a holiday which isn't supposed to be a holiday at all. One of the most restorative fortnights I ever spent was in the uniform of a private soldier on exercise with a TA battalion. I entered this state for the sake of a magazine article about the TA but the other members of my platoon and company took me for a regular recruit and I was drilled and worked, threatened and humiliated on the same terms as them.

I loved it. I think of those weeks of being among the times of my adult life when I have felt most completely carefree and free. Given no choice of clothes or of meals, of bedtimes and risings, of where to stand, how to walk, what to say (when spoken to) and when to die (if called upon to do so) I found my mind and my imagination soaring in an atmosphere of zero anxiety.

Idea for stories, plots for novels and lines of poetry came freely to me every day. Some of them weren't bad. I remember lying on rock on a mountain in Norway, keeping lookout at 2.00 on a cold autumn morning and thinking: "Now I understand why people choose to do this: no bills, no telephone, no family demands, no decisions. The more freedom you surrender, the more you receive."

This monastic motto should probably not be followed in action to its logical terminus since it would tend to suggest that the best terms of personal freedom and the fullest release of imagination may be found during a month's sojourn at Her Majesty's pleasure, banged up in one of the penal system's less commodious peters. In B Wing, assuredly, you will not be given a lot of choice about dress or diet. No uncertainties will trouble you there as to the best beach of the afternoon or the most agreeable restaurant for dinner. Other people may be discovered there who are perfectly willing to take a decision on your behalf. They may be recognised as the ones squinting through the eyehole and rattling the keys.

But let's not go too far in search of therapeutic interludes: we are supposed to be on holiday after all.

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Theatre: Benedict Nightingale meets director Terry Hands as he prepares Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great* for Stratford

Many works make Hands lighthearted

According to Terry Hands, running three theatres in Stratford and two in London was rather like keeping a five-ring circus in business. So there is a way of logic in his 13 months since he gave up his job as director of the Royal Shakespeare Company. He has been in Germany, using bears, tigers, elephants, acrobats, tightrope walkers, clowns and actors in *The Buffalo Bill Show*, a big-top version of Arthur Kopit's *Indians*.

There is also a certain logic in the project that brings him briefly back to Stratford and the RSC. On Thursday previews start of his revival of *Tamburlaine the Great*, as majestic a portrait of human zoology as even the Elizabethan theatre produced. Not many exotic animals have presented so famous a challenge to the world's trainers and tapers as Marlowe's all-conquering hero. Nor are many as likely to spring across the footlights and devour the front rows as Antony Sher, who plays him.

When Hands left the RSC, in July last year, he felt he had three choices. He could go abroad and run a company. He could stage a musical or light comedy in the West End. Or he could satisfy some inner restlessness with the kind of theatrical experiment that orthodox British playhouses, ordinary British subsidy and conventional British taste all seemed to prohibit. He decided that the first two options could wait a bit. Wasn't it time for a revival of Kopit's play about genocide in America? Didn't it merit a far harsher production than when the RSC originally staged it in 1968?

Accordingly, last spring found Hands living in a painted wagon on the outskirts of Berlin and reading Eastern Germany's only surviving circus for a highly eccentric debut in the West. "I couldn't think of a stronger symbol for man's dominance over the world," he explains. "A circle made of earth. Above, people fly like gods, never getting their feet dirty. Everywhere, homo sapiens demonstrates that he is more powerful than the biggest animal, fiercer than the fiercest carnivore, cleverer than the cleverest monkey. It was certainly an idea I could relate to: the American white man's mastery of one indigenous species, namely the Indians."

There seem to have been surprisingly few production problems, considering that the horsemen were French, the scene-shifters Moroccan, the musicians Polish, the acrobats Bulgarian, the other circus performers from the former East Germany, the actors from the former

West Germany, and the tigers apt to savage any bear that invaded their territory. The water got cut off, the electricity failed. The tightrope walkers found it hard to speak lines without falling off. But the raw, rough show that eventually arrived at Recklinghausen, in the Ruhr, was much as Hands wanted it. Columbus hovered aloft, describing the wonders of the New World in a letter to Ferdinand, while trainers dressed as conquistadores forced bears to jump through hoops, over barrels and onto spinning balls. A feral Geronimo was beaten into a small cage with whips and clubs, then surrounded by real tigers. "I tried to get the smell, the savagery of what happened," says Hands. "I wanted to fuse thought and feeling in images as powerful as I could make them."

'Until we become as ruthlessly honest about ourselves as Marlowe was, we're not going to change'

Everybody seems to have seen parallels between the world immediately outside the tent and the world inside it. Some days the circus was even invaded by gypsy children, refugees from the "ethnic cleansing" then getting under way in the Balkans. But for Hands, the production's importance was also aesthetic. It became a conscious effort to achieve the sort of intensity he saw in Elizabethan drama, yet had found so hard to create on the modern stage. The animals and the acrobats became an inadvertent preparation for *Tamburlaine*, or *Terminator III*, as Hands half-humorously calls the play.

"We forget how brutal the Elizabethans' world was. On their way to the theatre they would see pirates' heads rotting in the Thames, bodies on London Bridge and the smouldering stump where a witch or Catholic had been burnt. Yet at the same time there was this amazing aspiration towards some higher ideal."

That goes far towards summing up *Tamburlaine* itself. The hero persistently talks of climbing, soaring, flying, yet actually slaughters and ravages his way across half the known world. Moreover,

he dies in his bed, not merely unpunished and unrepentant but surrounded by admirers. Marlowe, unlike Shakespeare, seems disinclined to moralise or pass judgements. For him, *Tamburlaine* is a fascinating phenomenon; and that is that.

Yet perhaps it is that detachment which gives the play its value. "It's the least reassuring piece I know," says Hands. "What Marlowe is writing about are the basic instincts of the human animal. He says we are savage, and we are cruel in a way that only cats, of other creatures, are cruel. We may pretend we're basically moral people who make mistakes, but the whole of history, including history going on this very moment, proves the contrary. And it seems to me that until we become as ruthlessly honest about ourselves as Marlowe was we're not going to change anything."

Clearly, Hands has returned from Germany in a purposeful, un sentimental mood. The rehearsal system which means swift changeovers of set, makes it impossible for him to stage *Tamburlaine* on plain earth, as he would like; but the influence of the circus may be apparent in less explicit ways.

Can his cast recreate the extraordinarily stark, concentrated and unactorish speech of an acrobat who is simultaneously ensuring he stays on his tightrope? Can Hands communicate the feeling he persistently got when performers and animals were working together — that people are only jumped-up apes?

Whether or not he succeeds in that, the evening's intensity will certainly be increased by the cuts he has made. Instead of two parts running six hours, *Tamburlaine* should be finished in a single evening of about 170 minutes. The plot is repetitious, and the verse primitive and sometimes monotonous, so the gains should be greater than the losses.

After *Tamburlaine*, Hands is off to direct the opera *Simon Boccanegra* in Bremen, then some unnamed light comedy in London. But he also hopes that his circus career is not over. There are plans to remount *The Buffalo Bill Show* this autumn where the Well ran through central Berlin. A Christmas showing of Kipling's "Mowgli" stories might follow. "We've got a panther back in winter quarters," says Hands wistfully, "we've got elephants, we've got camels..."

● *Tamburlaine the Great* previews at the Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon (0789 295623) from Thursday and opens on Sept 1



Terry Hands on stage: "We forget how brutal the Elizabethans' world was"

ARTS BRIEF

Thomas in chair

AS IF mounting a film about Buddha were not difficult enough, British producer Jeremy Thomas has further complicated his life by becoming chairman of the British Film Institute. Thomas, aged 42, will take over from Sir Richard Attenborough, chairman for the past 11 years, on January 1. The Buddha project is *Little Buddha*, Thomas's third collaboration with director Bernardo Bertolucci, after *The Last Emperor* and *The Sheltering Sky*. Shooting should begin in September.

Budding anew

HAVING finally acquired a new theatre, Sam Walters, artistic director of the Orange Tree Theatre in Richmond, is now setting up a resident company of 11 actors. As he says, "I do not want to run a theatre where all the administration is permanent but the actors are merely passing through." The new company's first season starts on September 3 with Harley Granville Barker's *His Majesty*, which comes to Richmond from the Edinburgh Festival.

Rain dance

THE Royal Festival Hall celebrates the August 31 Bank Holiday with a 40th birthday party for the classic MGM musical *Singin' in the Rain*. Before the 7.45 screening of a newly restored print, a West End choreographer will give a free dance session in the Hall's ballroom to help spectators leap and twirl like Gene Kelly. Profits raised will be donated to Save the Children's drought relief programme.

Last chance...

FOR a view of life from the inside, few experiences come closer to that than Rod Williams's *No Remission*. The reality of this brilliantly crafted play about two murderers and a bank robber confined to a cell during a prison riot is enhanced by the engrossing performances of Pip Donaghy, Rob Spence and Daniel Craig, and the fluent direction of Derek Wax. Last performances are on Saturday at the Lyric Studio, Hammer-smith (081-741 8701).

EXPO '92: OPERA IN SEVILLE

Cat promises a hot time in the old town

Richard Morrison ventures outside the exhibition site in Seville for a refreshing draught of the true, traditional spirit of Spain

Night in Seville, so which side of the big divide do you venture? Enter that preposterous high-tech funfair, Expo '92, and you are stepping into gleaming, modern Spain at its brashiest. In the hundred-degree heat, you can gawp until 4am at the bizarre pavilions — including the expensive but undeniably startling British wall-of-water — or carouse in the cacophonous bars. Many do, every night.

But back in old Seville, El Gato Montés is playing, for the first time in decades. Go and hear Manuel Penella's quintessential Spanish opera and you are stepping back into ancient, superstitious death-obsessed Spain. Bandit and matador vie with hot-headed venom for the same girl: gypsy foretells violent death, the music pulses in a torrid tangle of sevillana, pasodoble and seguidilla rhythms.

This is a Spain where men are men, and bulls are nervous. Where nature is red in tooth and gore. Where a chorus of villagers, having danced in stamping, flamenco style in Act I, disappears in Act II to the back of the auditorium to shout "Ole" as the tenor mimes his gruesome death in Seville's own bullfight. And where, by Act III, the stage is a riot of corpses and candles.

Let me not give the impression, however, that this opera is a gloomy work. In fact, it is written in the spirit of the Spanish light-opera tradition, the zarzuela. Its tunes, as unmistakably Andalusian in spirit as the dialect in which Penella wrote his own libretto, are instantly hummable and never stop coming. Some of the joints between them are none too subtle, and it is pointless to pretend that the work has *Carmen*'s dramatic



Quintessence of Spain: Plácido Domingo and Veronica Villarroel in *El Gato Montés*

depth, or that Act III is not an anti-climax. With two of the three principal characters already dead, it is given over to the contorted and suicidal bandit, "El Gato Montés" (the wild cat) himself.

Nevertheless, the piece wowed Valencia at its premiere in 1916 — the composer was carried like a triumphant bullfighter from the theatre to

his home — and it is to the Hispanic musical world's shame that it has languished unheard for more than 20 years.

That it was revived, as one of an astonishing 55,000 events in Expo '92, was due entirely to Plácido Domingo's fanatical loyalty to a piece in which, as a boy, he had watched his parents (both zarzuela singers) take leading roles. Last year,

mastering all the bargaining power at a famous tenor's disposal, he convinced Deutsche Grammophon that what the company most needed was a recording of this totally forgotten opera in its catalogue. An all-Spanish cast was chosen, and it is this crew (minus the luxury casting of Teresa Berganza as the palm-reading gypsy) that Domingo,

Expo '92's musical director, has re-assembled in Seville.

Domingo himself plays Rafael, the ill-starred matador. He sings the part splendidly, revelling in the Spanish inflections of vocal line, though he looks a little mature to be playing with bulls.

Similarly, that giant bass-baritone, Juan Pons, looks more of an ox than a wild cat in the title role, but he sings with startling power. The fought-over girl, Solea, is played by a New York-based Chilean soprano of great potential, Veronica Villarroel: the metallic edge to a voice that is strong and true is ideal in this passionate Spanish repertoire. Among many fine singers in smaller parts, Carlos Chaveson's excellently characterised comic priest is a jewel.

Emilio Sagi's production lays the lurid detail on thick: projecting film of a real bullfight (and a real going of a man and a horse) seems a cheap trick. But there is colour and flair on the stage, with the chorus of the Madrid Zarzuela Company on hand, and in the pit the Madrid Symphony Orchestra plays with perceptible relish under Miguel Roa (who re-constructed Penella's score for the recording).

The production took place in Seville's smart new Lyric Theatre, the Teatro de la Maestranza, which opened only a few months ago when Domingo conducted *Carmen*. The Maestranza management will be hard-pressed to live up to this inaugural season.

Deutsche Grammophon's recording of *El Gato Montés* (435 776-2, 2 CDs) is released in Britain on Monday.

● Tomorrow in European Arts: art at Expo '92

TELEVISION REVIEW

Put the blame on Ma'am

Eve Strikes Back (BBC 1)

His accompanying slide showed a cartoon of a muscle-bound woman standing victoriously astride a prone male. "This is the syndrome we will end up with," he averred. "I don't want female dominance at all, do you, lads?"

When this is what women are up against, no wonder they stay indoors peering through the curtains. But the message of *Eve Strikes Back*, presented by singer-composer Lynsey de Paul, did not concern duffing up crime prevention experts, however much the idea might appeal.

The message was that, whereas years ago women were told not to fight back against rapists (on the grounds that resistance makes attackers more violent), now there is research to prove that resistance does not increase the risk, and that sticking your fingers in your attacker's eyes (meanwhile also belting, hitting, kicking) really takes him by surprise, and may actually drive him off.

Testimonies from women who have successfully evaded or beaten off attacks were interspersed with self-defence classes on exercise mats in

gloomy basements. Poor old Chief Inspector, watching his worst nightmare come true, as each woman pushed away her pretend assailant and levelled blows at his well-padded torso, screaming like a steam whistle. This was a far cry indeed from the insulting revelation that women should draw the curtains at night (of course of course) and avoid deserted railway cuttings (how blind I have been).

The research sounded convincing (it was based on a casually-mentioned two million recent cases in the United States). The only bit of the programme that failed to convince me, actually, was when celebrity barrister Helena Kennedy blithely assured that the law unequivocally supports the right of the attacked person to use "considerable force" in self-defence.

Somewhat this rang very hollow to my ears. Fear of the blame is just as hard to eradicate as fear of attack.

And it isn't helped, of course, when our dear friend the Chief Inspector shows pictures of a woman glancing nervously behind her at a man in the shadows, and says in all seriousness, "I don't know whether she's looking over her shoulder to say 'Get away from me' or 'Come on'. I just don't know with that one."

LYNNE TRUSS

PROMS: ALBERT HALL/RADIO 3

Youngsters' dazzling display

opinion that teenagers are better qualified to play this music than their elders.

Yet, during an undeniably technically dazzling performance of Mahler's Second Symphony, the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain seemed sometimes to be fixed on an emotional autopilot. Clearly Tadaaki Otaka and the team who had been training these young players

during their annual summer course had done an efficient job.

Every musician — and of course as this was the NYO the wind and brass sections were doubled, even in this lavishly scored music — knew his or her job thoroughly; every department displayed excellent solo and ensemble work. But I had a feeling that perhaps all the preparation had eliminat-

ed some spontaneity, though the louder, more dramatic moments — the crashing, glorious chords of the finale for instance — unleashed untrammelled passions. Otaka did his best, however, to maintain lightness and gentleness in the middle movements, and his overall vision was a refreshingly direct and unselfconscious one.

Jean Rigby gave "Ulrich"

with marvellous control and richness, but Lesley Garrett seemed slightly out of sorts, leaping rather than emerging from the quiet choral texture, sung with some finesse by the BBC Welsh Chorus and the Bach Choir, in the finale; perhaps anxiety about projection was responsible.

Earlier, Berg's Three Orchestral Pieces, Op 6, posed fewer interpretative problems; Otaka extracted the right searching dark flavours, holding this complex, disarming alchemy in perfect balance.

STEPHEN PETTITT

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Omnibus on a new route

After nearly 25 years, the BBC1 arts series is thriving. But, John Dugdale asks, are changes in the air?

They don't make titles like *Omnibus* any more. The word derives from the Latin word meaning "for all"; it glances at "omnivorous", and alludes subtly to "the man on the Clapham omnibus", the viewer BBC programme-makers were once urged to bear in mind. All splendidly evocative of the 1967, when the first edition of the arts series was transmitted.

Editor Andrew Snell, who launches the 25th anniversary season next month, has restored *Omnibus*'s self-confidence after a decade of uncertainty in which successive editors have attempted to find a way to cover the arts for a BBC1 audience. Snugly established in a post-*Casualty* Friday night niche, his *Omnibus* has tackled a wide variety of subjects, from Torville and Dean to obscure Latin-American designers. Madonna and Prince have been profiled, and the Prince of Wales has been given an opportunity to deliver his architectural credo.

The line-up for the autumn season continues the catholic approach, mixing less known figures like the painter Avigdor Arikha with such familiar names as Peter Hall and Günter Grass; and mass entertainers like John Ford with avant-garde adventurers such as Angela Carter and Robert Lepage. An hour de-



Omnibus faces (clockwise from top left) Stephen Cass, Ken Russell, Graham Greene, Tommy Steele, Jon Pertwee

voted to film director Ridley Scott might have raised eyebrows among the BBC hierarchy in 1967, but a documentary marking the quinqucentenary of the death of Piero della Francesca is firmly in the Reithian tradition.

Mr Snell's successor for the autumn 1993 season will be Nigel Williams, the present editor of BBC2's *Bookmark*.

By then, John Birt will be installed as director general of the BBC. Mr Birt's impact is difficult to predict. His "high ground" strategy would seem to ensure a secure future for arts programming, and it may be significant that the current run of *Omnibus* will be extended after Christmas to allow an opportunity to see a selection of its classic pro-

grammes. However, when Mr Birt was at London Weekend Television, where he was programme director for five years before joining the BBC in 1987, *The South Bank Show* was required to conform to the Birtist "mission to explain" — hence the classroom approach to culture, the centrality of the interview, the distrust of visual stylings.

This no-frills approach, and determination to avoid any charge of artiness, set few trends. Fourteen years after the first *South Bank Show*, arts television has departed a

long way from its presenter-interview format.

Unless Mr Birt has modified his views of late, it would be natural for him to ask the BBC arts output to become more tough minded.

In recent years, TV reviewers have faulted individual programmes for a lack of scepticism. Profiles of writers, movie-makers and pop or opera singers

have been accused of being extended, sophisticated commercials, generally linked to the availability of new product. Defenders would hold that the role of an arts documenta-

ry should be as much to celebrate as to criticise. Recently, writing in the *Observer*, Mr Bragg contended that "[*The South Bank Show*] shortlist of subjects invariably consists of artists we admire," and that "we have developed a method of putting the artist at the centre of the programme and this can be deceptive".

At the other extreme from *The South Bank Show*, which has increasingly allied itself to openings, publication dates and new releases, lies the output of Channel 4's arts chief, Waldemar Januszczak.

His preference for "feistiness" is represented by Muriel Gray's send-up series *Art is Dead*, and by *J'Accuse*, a monthly exercise in iconoclasm.

But the channel's overall performance is patchy, and overloaded towards negativity: we seem to be stuck with programmes that are either wholly celebratory or wholly debunking.

The other challenge which editors of arts series will have to confront is the increasingly concerted attack on their "metropolitan bias".

During last year's ITV franchise auction, a number of regional companies questioned the hegemony of *The South Bank Show*, which currently commands more than 20 hours a year.

Granada, in particular, has consistently pushed for a more equitable allocation of network opportunities, arguing that artistic activity north of the Trent is under-represented. Meridian, the winner of TV's southern licence, has proposed a 13-week run of a series called *Tango*. Mr Bragg's near-monopoly is safe at the moment, but from autumn 1993 ITV policy is up for grabs.

The BBC can expect a similar welting up of discontent. The vast majority of the corporation's work in the arts is produced in London, although outposts in Glasgow and Bristol are allowed to make limited contributions. *Omnibus*, *Arena* and *Bookmark* are all based in the same building in London.

Provincial resentment has already been voiced, by a rather unexpected seditionist. Grilled on the BBC's *See For Yourself* in January, Michael Checkland, the present director general, went out of his way to criticise *The Late Show* for its inadequate coverage of arts and artists in the regions.

The designer suits of Mr Birt have led to his being perceived as the archetypal London media trendy. But programme-makers would do well to keep in mind that he grew up in Liverpool.

Have I got good news for you?

Advertising religion could lead to a few unholy rows

New Year's day, 1993. You are setting back to watch the 17th repeat of *Goldfinger* when Cliff Richard appears in the commercial break. No, he is not trying to clear unsold stocks of his Christmas single. He is selling Christianity.

From the beginning of next year religious advertising will be allowed on ITV and Channel 4 for the first time. But then it has never been clear to me, perhaps because I'm a dimwitted agnostic, exactly why religious advertising was banned from television in the first place.

Faith is one of a handful of things — others include politics, fortune-telling, breath-testing devices and cigarettes — which somebody decided should not be permitted to sell themselves electronically.

They are permitted to do so in print and on billboards. Most of them could, if they so wished, promote their wares by telephone, or by writing to you personally. But the box has been off-limits.

The reason some advertisers are banned from television but not from other media is, of course, that television is believed to be persuasively powerful. So they are allowed to advertise as long as they don't do it too effectively. It's loopy Looking-Glass logic or — as it is more generally known — British compromise.

In the case of religion, the arguments against television advertising have been particularly perplexing. Many of the leading pillars of the Church object to it. Presumably they have looked across to America, where religion is thriving and church-going has grown apace, bolstered by the heavy use of advertising and religious channels.

And have said to themselves: "We don't want any of that kind of thing here." Here they see the number of regular British church-goers plummeting to an all-time low, but have no wish to use one of the most powerful advertising media available to turn the tide. Perplexing?

Utterly mystifying. The anti-television clerics mounted a valiant crusade to guard against the danger

of religious commercials becoming, well, commercial. As a result, when advertising is allowed next year it will be little short of a miracle if it has any effect whatsoever.

While the Lord managed to get by with ten succinct commandments, the new Code of Religious Advertising runs to more than 1,000 words and more than 30 specific regulations. For a start, the code says: "Advertising must not be used to expound religious doctrine," and that "advertisements must not directly exhort viewers to change their religious behaviour", which just about torpedoes the entire venture before it ever gets launched. The rules go on to insist that

"Claims that a particular religion is the 'only' or 'true' faith are unacceptable." In detergent language that would lead to commercials cooing: "Boffo washes nice and white but so do all the rest of them."

Other rules say that testimonials must not be used (so much for the parables), advertisements must not play on fear

(all mentions of hell are thus damned), and advertisements must not be targeted at the under-18s (Jesus said: "Suffer the little children to come unto me" — but not until the nine o'clock watershed).

Meanwhile, while our clergy worry about the proprieties of putting religion on the box, down in Australia Young & Rubicam, the advertising agency, has been using a multi-media campaign to sell the Dalai Lama. It would not, at present, be allowed here.

But down there, although they are not constricted by a cornucopia of ludicrous rules, they have run into some real advertising problems. One of their initial advertisements showed the Dalai Lama's feet, but it was knocked because he is not too hot on feet.

And plastic bags with his picture on them were scrapped because it was feared that people might accidentally insult him by sitting on them.

Presumably Cliff, should he ever really get involved, will pay similar heed to the Archbishop of Canterbury's sensitivities.

SELLING POINT

Winston Fletcher



Hundreds of halves and lots of extra time

Funny old game, television. Not long ago armchair football fans were bemoaning the dearth of their favourite sport on television. When the new English league season kicks off this weekend, this is unlikely to be the complaint.

After a summer of unprecedented upheaval for the nation's number one game, the broadcasting details are becoming clear. BSkyB, having netted England's top 22 clubs, is in the ascendant with the new Premier League (formerly the first division), but the terrestrial networks are fighting to the final whistle.

The real clogging will occur on Sunday afternoons. There could be three live games to choose from: a Premier League fixture on Sky Sports, a Football League (formerly the second, third and fourth divisions) match on an ITV channel and, soon, a top Italian game on Channel 4. Topping up the various cup competitions, the regionalisation possibilities, internationals and replays.

From this weekend, footballing couch potatoes will be able to fill their boots — as many as 200 matches will be shown live

there could be 200 live matches televised during the season.

There will be winners and losers. BSkyB has gone in deep — £60 million a year for five years, an investment eased by a BBC contribution — to skim off the cream in England. It plans a five-hour football binge from 2 o'clock on Sunday afternoons, a magazine featuring phone-ins wrapped around the live match and some form of soccer programming seven days a week.

On Monday nights Sky Sports will show its second live Premier League game of the week. Sky also has England home internationals and, shared with the BBC, FA Cup ties.

The BBC, for its part, has more than just Sky's crumbs. Desmond Lynam will anchor *Match of the Day* in its traditional Saturday night slot;

John Motson will continue as first-choice commentator. There will be extended highlights of two of the afternoon's Premier League games, plus the goals from all the others. On Wednesdays, *Sportsnight* will mop up more action, including footage from Sky's Sunday and Monday matches. The BBC has exclusive live rights to Liverpool's home games in the European Cup Winners' Cup, one FA Cup semi-final and the Cup final itself.

Add highlights of England's internationals, and this could satisfy many an appetite. What is missing, though, is the regular live appearances of the big clubs — the crucial Sky advantage.

The ITV network has not been knocked out of this competition by any means. European campaigns

mounted by Leeds United and Manchester United are exclusive properties, as is the Coca-Cola (formerly Rumbelows) Cup.

What is interesting is how the catchment areas of the individual ITV companies compare with the geographical positions of the more senior clubs in the Football League. Central, which predicts that it will transmit 30 live league games, claims eight first division clubs, for example, and LWT just two. These will be important factors. Yorkshire will also be showing live local games on Sunday afternoons.

Granada, which also broadcasts to a region with a number of clubs in the upper echelons, will have a Saturday afternoon sports magazine, hosted by Elton Welsby, that will lean towards local Football League sides,

and in midweek will pick up on the Coca-Cola Cup and the international progress of the North-West's clubs. Anglia is planning a midweek sports magazine, presented by Kevin Piper and Gerry Harrison, and is discussing the possibility of offering live Sunday local league action.

Viewers in Scotland, where the season has already begun, will be able to see Scottish League highlights, as well as reports on a couple of top English games, on Saturday nights (BBC1), and Sunday afternoons (Scottish TV). The BBC has Scotland's home internationals (including one live match) and the Tennent's Cup, while Scottish TV has claimed the Skol Cup.

Let's switch over to Channel 4. On September 6, live coverage of Italian Serie A (the top division) matches will begin. This is an interesting development, the success of which is hard to predict.

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Love letters from a legend

Groucho Marx wrote warmly and wittily to his daughter Miriam. She tells Kate Muir why she has published the correspondence

"John you say you met in an elevator. Was the elevator going up at the time, or down? This is very important, for going down in an elevator one always has that sinking feeling and for all I know you may have confused this with love. If you were going up, it is clearly a case of love at first sight and it also proves that he is a rising young man."

Such helpful advice was typical of the hundreds of letters the comedian Groucho Marx wrote to his daughter, Miriam. The recent publication of this correspondence in America, and readings of the letters this autumn on Radio 4, reveal a domestic side of Groucho never seen before, as well as his ample wit. He was an obsessive correspondent, being very much opposed to expensive long-distance telephone calls, and usually sent his daughter two letters a week, in between writing to her older brother,



Groucho and Miriam, c 1940

Arthur, various important persons, and *The New York Times*. Miriam Marx Allen, now 65, says she decided to make their private correspondence public because she did not want Groucho to be seen as "just a sarcastic, sardonic, leering, sex-starved, funny man who waved his eyebrows". In the letters, the moustache with the cigar dispenses wisdom on theatre, film, baseball, cars, boy friends and the right winter coat. Groucho's advice and enquiries are tempered with jokes and sharp observations on Hollywood life. Asides on anyone from Humphrey Bogart, to Jack Benny, and Carmen Miranda — described as "a pretty gamey assignment" — pepper the text. "Bogart was at the house the other night and got completely drunk. This is a pretty normal thing for him. He's a bore when he's stoned and not a hell of a lot better when sober."

The correspondence between father and daughter began when Miriam was 11, in 1938, and finished in 1967, ten years before Groucho's death, when they were living close to each other in California. For him, it straddled three marriages, and for her, college, jobs, one marriage, and long term alcoholism. Only his letters survive.

"I kept them all in an old laundry bag, which I took everywhere. It's remarkable I still have them, because drinkers go strange places." Now living in San Clemente, California, Mrs Allen says, "Groucho was as loving and supportive as a father could be. That was the problem. He was intelligent, funny, witty — everything I wanted in a man — and my boy friends when I was young never survived the comparison." She recovered permanently from alcohol dependency only a few months before he died.

"Just as I felt, aged 50, that it was

time to get sober, I also felt recently that it was time to share my father with the world, even though I had to lay myself bare in the process."

Groucho adjusts his letters as Miriam grows up, often writing on hotel notepaper on tour with shows around the country. When she is 14, he tells her how much he is missing their dog, Duke, and claims to have "had it out" with him as to his true owner.

"He said, I like Miriam, she is a nice kid and occasionally brushes my coat and gives me a bone, but to compare her to you is sheer folly. Why Groucho old boy, you are my man. That's the first time he ever called me Groucho, and believe me I was thrilled to my fingertips. He usually calls me Julius [his real name]..."

Later, when Miriam goes to study writing at the exclusive Bennington College in Vermont, they have constant tussles over her student allowance, after which Groucho generally gives in. The Marxes were by no means poor. He constantly moans about the alimony he has to pay to his first wife, Miriam's mother Ruth, and, later in the book, to his second wife, Kay.

"My father had a weakness for younger women. He married three in their early twenties," Mrs Allen says. "He should really have never married my mother. She was pretty, and a dancer, and no intellectual challenge for him. Kay was my friend at first, and then I realised she was coming round to see him more than me, and I found that very difficult."

"I suppose our addiction was alcohol, and his was young women. He liked to be the dominant one in a relationship."

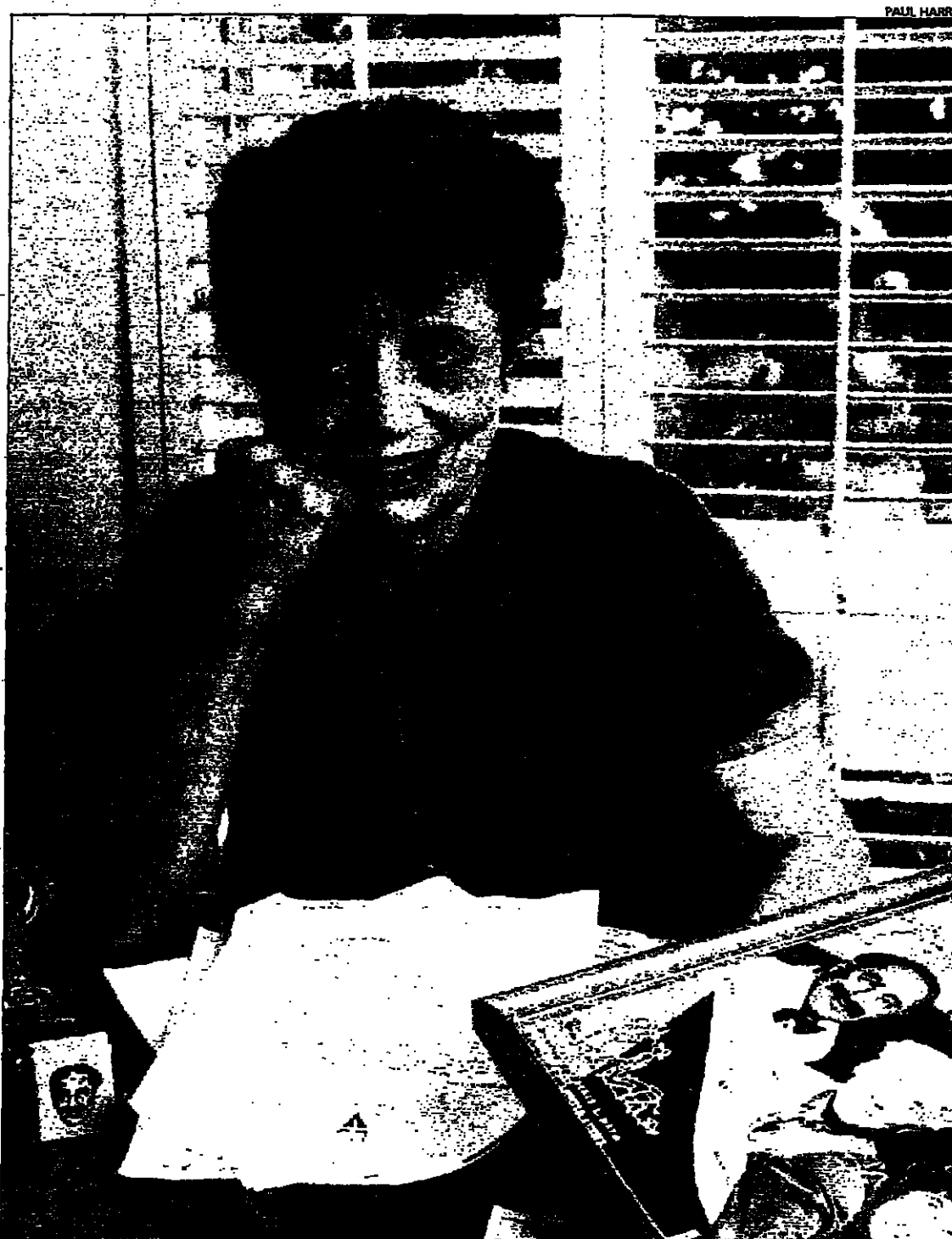
Groucho's letters skirt around his rocky home life, and he prefers to talk of writers or his latest film. Only as each relationship nears its disastrous climax do details emerge, and Kay is depicted throwing lamps across the room late at night.

Miriam and Arthur spent their childhood with their father, after their mother Ruth left "to lead the gay life", often consisting of drinking. Miriam left for university, where her academic performance varied, but her steady consumption of money did not.

Groucho was sympathetic: "I read your mid-term report and, briefly, my analysis of it is that your intelligence is higher than your concentration. However, I won't regard this too seriously until the term expires and we can sit down and talk it over man to man to Andy Hardy."

Aged 17, Miriam could no longer stand living with her increasingly volatile mother and moved out to live alone in the city. "A few years later, once I began drinking too, I began to see what she had gone through."

But even when his daughter was at her worst, Groucho never failed to



Memories of Groucho: Miriam Marx Allen, now aged 65, with souvenirs from the great comedian's life

note that he loved her at the end of every letter, even ones which contained stern admonishments. He also kept paying her expensive fees for the Menninger Clinic in Kansas, and wrote throughout her long stay there: "It is quite a program. If I didn't care about you, I would say the hell with the whole thing and let you shift for yourself, but plus my affection for you, I sincerely believe you are worth rehabilitating."

Mrs Allen met her husband Gordon, another patient, at the clinic. They are divorced, but stay in touch.

She maintains that her father could be a bully, deciding when she was "cured", sometimes to the contrary opinion of medical staff "who stood up to him for once in his life". She has been dependent on her father for much of her life, and even now, lives off the trust fund he left her, while she writes her second book, filling in the story of her life between the lines of the letters.

Perhaps independence from Groucho and his money earlier in her life might have made her take

responsibility for herself more quickly. "He gave you money when he chose. It was his way of controlling us, and it was totally inconsistent. In his marriages, he doled it out, instead of treating his wives as equals. I remember he bought Kay and I some very expensive velvet hostess gowns, the sort of thing I would never buy myself, but he wouldn't give you the five bucks you needed for a long-distance phone call."

The darker side of the Marx family's life is only hinted at in the letters, although Mrs Allen occasionally adds a short note at the end of one to explain that she was drinking, or there was a divorce, or to note the nickname of a star. The book gives unexpected insights into Groucho's criticism of his own career, constantly worried that his script is not up to scratch, or that a film will do badly at the box office.

Some of his more appalling later films were done out of family need, says Mrs Allen. "Chico was gambling a lot then, and he'd ring my father and say that the gamblers would kill

him for all the money he owed, unless the Marx brothers made another film to pay his debts." The brothers would then go to work. Groucho was closer to Harpo, who also lived in Beverly Hills with his family. After seeing a newsreel on the papacy, he notes: "The Pope, incidentally, looks like Chico and has the same kind of dialect. Imagine kissing Chico's feet..."

Groucho could be just as demanding as his brothers and wives. When "Schmir", as he called her, failed to write back smartly, he would complain huffily. "He was so prolific", Mrs Allen says. "I don't know how anyone could have kept up with him."

She has now caught the habit too, and writes to everyone. She thinks that her father was a fine master of the letter as a literary form. As written history is increasingly wiped out by the telephone, the volume published this summer pleases her.

Love, Groucho: Letters from Groucho Marx to his daughter Miriam, published in America by Faber & Faber

Sorting the kids from the sheep

Might I present this hen, may I introduce you to the dog, donkey or duck. It is a curious variety of our species to want to introduce each other, especially our young, to other breeds. Yet we humanoids do. No sooner do our 'babies' eyes focus than we start the preliminary introductions to other life forms.

Now, if you happen to be born in the country, you see it how it is, but for the rest of its town-bound folk the first sighting may be thoroughly misleading. What you're given, as a child, is a book called *Farmyard Fun*. On one page, filling it to the corners is a mottled quadruped which your parents tell you says, "Moo". On the opposite page is a two-legged, feathered fowl also filling the page to the corners which you're told cucks and lays eggs.

Logic would suggest to the child that each of these things was the same size. The rural child who has seen the genuine article first is not to be fooled. Urban children are in for a shock. It doesn't matter which you meet first, the second is going to come as a great surprise.

If you see the cow first, what a miniaturised feathery absurdity the hen will be. If you clap eyes on the hen first and expect a proportionate bovine version, the furry four-legged object the size of a Ford Escort is bound to alarm you. And if your initial introduction to livestock is in a picture book, the chances are that the rabbits will have, or have lost, little blue jackets, and the cows will be wearing the trousers.

Because I'm aware of the distance between animal reality and pastoral illusion, I welcome the regular visits my children are able to make to their aunt and uncle's 52-acre free range establishment in County Wicklow, in the Republic of Ireland, where they can sort out the sheep from the goats, agriculturally speaking.

Even when they know that animals aren't like those in *Beatrix Potter* or even *Charlotte's Web*, there's still a lot for urban children to discover. Life, death and the whole business unravels before them every day.

The hens chuck around on the hillside obligingly coming indoors to lay their eggs in nesting boxes. Nothing so appeals to a child as touring the sheds to collect their still-warm eggs. But the hens are far less attractive when they have stopped laying and are in moult.

The young of any species are intended to be appealing, yet the process of procreation can be anything but. Some creatures, my children have discovered, produce their offspring in perfectly formed oval containers, others, like piglets arrive in what seem to be cling-film parcels. Being born and dying on a farm seem far more closely linked than in city life. For days, we monitored a



DAVINA LLOYD

Muscovy duck sitting on a clutch of a dozen eggs. At last they began to hatch — fluffy and waterproofed, soon ready to swim, they seemed perfectly designed. Then one was found half-shelled, half-formed and wholly dead. The mother abandoned it and the creature was incinerated without ceremony. My children learnt that there's no time in commercial poultry-rearing to undertake the polite, formal rituals they would have afforded to a departed pet budgerigar.

From the cows — Friesian crosses, Charolais, Simmental, and Short Horn — the children learned about anatomy, milk production, adoption and sex. They love the stories that go with the animals. The two silky eared Anglo-Nubian goats are a great favourite. A man at the hardware store gave them to my sister after they'd eaten the trousers of his best suit off the washing line. At their new home, they are several flower tubs and a treasured rain gauge.

Then there are the sheep stories. The children still like to hear of the day their father was helping to dip the sheep and fell into the chemical bath. It's a comfort to know he won't get "keds", whatever they may be.

Mind you, there are mites in hen shed three and nobody in there can escape without a few tiny, red full stops about their person. So the children get to learn about who lives on whom and who lives off whom in the cycle of farming.

Watching from the road, or a long way off from blue remembered hills, can give a romantic illusion about farm existence. The children learn to distinguish the romance from the reality. A consignment of tiny young turkey chicks arrives — adorable to hold in your hand now, destined to grace tables on December 25. However you dress it up, that's the true story of why they're all down on the farm. Disconcerting to be introduced to your Christmas lunch in August.

"Still," said my 10-year-old son, as we watched various creatures grazing and gambolling and squabbling over worms on the green fields and mountain slopes. "They have a nice life till then." And the children have also had the chance to range freely before we take them back to town.

Sunshine sense

SUNGLASSES seem to be the most popular free gift for children at the moment — whether they come in cereal packets or taped to magazines. Some carry "UV Protection" stickers, others do not. Parents should caution children against wearing this latter type for any length of time, says Amy Isherwood, an optometrist who is a general counsellor of the Association of Optometrists. "There is a good chance that they will let rays into the eye that won't do any good," she says. "Children should have glasses which are to the British Standard and which filter out UV rays. Better still, wear hats."

Clowning around CHILDREN have completely filled the summer classes in circus skills run by Circus Space, the London training centre for adults and children, professionals and amateurs. The new autumn schedule is just out, offering seven weekly sessions of after-school classes in circus skills for 7-11 year olds at £24 a course. Choose from acrobatics, flying trapeze and trampolines on Thursdays or acrobatics, static trapeze and juggling on Fridays. Instructions include top circus performers and a former British Olympic gymnast. For brochure and booking forms write to Circus Space, 39-41 North Road, London N7 9DP (071 700 0868).

Head start PARENTS of young children may appreciate the helpful guides by Barbara Geere, *Seven Ways to Help Your Child with Reading and Seven Ways to Help Your Child*

AND BRIEFLY

with Maths, both available for £2.25 from WH Smith and other bookshops or direct from the author at 15 Stamford Drive, Bromley, Kent BR2 0XF for £2.60 including postage and packing. Both guides offer suggestions for reading, games, computer games, book clubs and other sources of stimulation. "It is increasingly recognised that children helped by their parents do better at school than those who receive no help," Ms Geere, who trained as a teacher, says.

Grotesque fun THE grisly "gamekeeper" is your "host" for a gruesome game called "Atmosphere", a pioneering piece of video technology which is widely available from Woolworth and other toy shops for about £25. The price covers the "60-minute video", a "graveyard gameboard", 256 "time, fate and chance" cards, plus "nightmare" cards and plastic tombstone playing pieces. Other characters include a poltergeist, a vampire, a witch, a mummy, a zombie and a werewolf.



Story-time: Barbara Geere's books offer tips to parents

Meet the Mellops

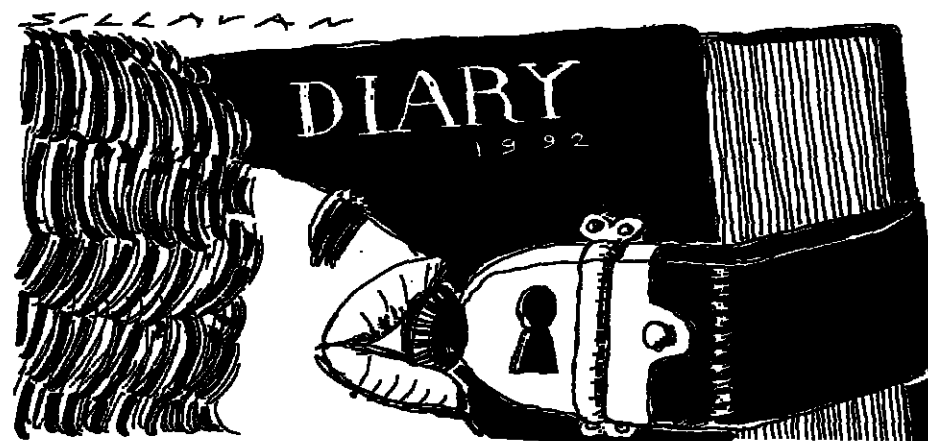
IN keeping with the trend towards "worthy" children's television series with a "new age" theme (originated by *Captain Planet*) comes *The Miraculous Mellops* — a 20-part adventure promising "a disarming fantasy tale about interplanetary co-operation, faith, trust, young love and Gordon Gekko style greed" to be broadcast on Channel 4 from Sunday, September 20. The Mellop family, nurseryman Bill, his three children and their dog Ajax, hope to give *The Simpsons* a run for our money.

Beam me up "TREKKIES" — fans of the *Star Trek* films and television series — will be checking into the Hotel Piccadilly in Manchester for the thirty-fourth British Star Trek Convention later this month. The convention, which takes place from August 28-31, is open to adults and children, at £10 and £5 a day respectively.

VICTORIA MCKEE

Strictly private, for your eyes only

Is reading a child's diary always a gross invasion of privacy? Some teenagers may secretly welcome it



The parent's view of the findings is nearly always pessimistic

man whose name she didn't know, slept with him, smoked dope and hitchhiked home. "She had told me she was going to see a movie with a schoolfriend and this showed me what a compulsive liar she was. Now I keep incredible tabs on her every move. Privacy? Bugger her privacy! I'm the one who has to pick up the consequences of her stupid actions. So she's not entitled to privacy until she grows up and leaves home. These days you just can't afford to let ignorance be bliss."

This mother, who would never read another adult's diary, admits she would not tell her daughter that she reads her diary: she regards it as a method of communication with her "like the telephone". To reveal her snooping would be like cutting the wires. On the other hand I know a teenager who is so alarmed by the idea of anyone reading her diaries that she keeps them in a lock-up chest (provided by her mother).

Now the chest is full — she started when she was 11 — she releases a five-year-old diary for her parents to read whenever she puts in a new one. "What shocked me particularly was my absence," says her mother, showing that even if nothing awful is revealed a parent will always find something to upset or hurt them in a child's diary. "It wasn't as if my daughter had put anything in about how much she hated me. I just wasn't there. There was one mention — 'Mummy came back from the States so we went out to the

Pizza Express' — but apart from that there was nothing except a totally fictitious entry which read 'Mummy came in my room and threatened to beat me'."

Even when a diary reveals that a child is actually behaving quite well, the parent's view of the findings is nearly always pessimistic. Thus a mother will write to me saying that she's found out that her daughter had an abortion three months ago and is now on the Pill. Her conclusion is: "A slag at 16! If I tell her I know, she'll realise I have read her diary! What can I do?" The fact that the girl was capable of dealing with a teenage crisis so ably on her own is actually a sign of maturity. Indeed, the ability to be a private person is in itself part of growing up, and should be encouraged.

Teenage boys don't write diaries in the same way as girls. The nearest to a diary dilemma involving a boy that I could find concerned a mother who read a postcard to her son

from friends holidaying abroad. "No sign of Charlie who has gone up everyone's nose," it read, enigmatically. "Looking forward to meeting Stan, brother of Charlie, when we get back." Sensing drug-speak she rang up SCODA, the Standing Committee on Drug Abuse, and learnt that Charlie was cocaine and Stan was Ecstasy.

The son dealt with her confrontation impeccably. "I can't believe it!" he said, starting at her. "I can assure you, apart from the odd joint, none of us are into drugs. And all I can say," he added, in high indignation, "is that if I were a parent and my son got a card like that through the post, I would be just as angry, worried and upset as you. I shall have words with those stupid friends of mine!"

Because her fears were sparked off by a postcard — public property — this parent could afford to be open. But if she had read those sinister references in a diary, she'd have been trapped — tormented with anxiety and guilt with only herself to blame.

Unless a child seems exceptionally unhappy and cannot be persuaded to reveal what is troubling her or him, there can surely never be any excuse for reading a diary. But perhaps as a last desperate measure to get to the root of a child's troubles, it might be excused occasionally — as long as the parent is tactful enough to console the child without revealing that he or she has been snooping. There again, if the parent is that concerned and tactful, the child would probably not use the diary as confidant anyway.

VIRGINIA IRONSIDE
Virginia Ironside is the problem page editor of the Sunday Mirror.

MANAGEMENT

TUESDAY AUGUST 11 1992

Doing away with the doom-mongers

Local government must shed its inferiority complex if it is to remain an influential part of our democratic system

Years of attacks by central government have left county and town halls filled with foreboding and convinced that central government is bent on centralising powers in Whitehall. Yet now there are encouraging signals from senior ministers that they want to forge strong working partnerships with local government, thereby emphasising the strengths of the system.

Of course, there is no lack of ammunition for those who want to argue that all is lost. Removal of functions such as further education and waste regulation, and the reduction of the proportion of local authority income raised by local taxation and capping, all reinforce the arguments of the doom-mongers.

How then can they be wrong? For a start, any sector of the economy which manages £65 billion — as local government does, accounting for 11 per cent of the UK gross domestic product — holds the strings to an enormous purse. What is more, that spend-

ing power is not spread out in penny numbers: individual authorities' budgets range from several million to more than one billion, depending on their size and responsibilities.

Within those budgets, authorities have a massive degree of flexibility, scope for local choice and for focusing their resources. But it is now claimed that because local authorities raise only 15 per cent of their revenues from their own local taxation, they inevitably have lost control over their budgets.

Although widely quoted, the figure of 15 per cent is seriously misleading because it is a net figure that allows for rebates and discounts. In reality, the local taxpayers contribute 21 per cent of local authority spending.

Raising more than a fifth of its income by its own local tax

decisions gives councils more than marginal flexibility over levels of budgets, and is a proportion that compares favourably with most European local governments.

Second, and contrary to popular opinion, the share contributed by domestic taxpayers is now back to where it has been historically since the 1930s. If there has been a blip, it has been during the last decade when their contribution rose steadily to more than 30 per cent as the government deliberately reduced the share met from centrally raised taxation.

Although the business rate is now set at a uniform level nationally and redistributed to local authorities, locally raised revenues



PAUL RIGG

still meet at least 50 per cent of local government spending. Local authorities should not be surprised that the government has intro-

duced capping in order to stage-manage the introduction of both the community charge and its new council tax.

Yet within spending restrictions, local authorities still have the discretion to make national policies work at local level to meet the need of real local people, not of formulae driven by historical data.

A popular myth is that the government's education reforms have reduced local authorities to the role of bankers in the education field. Since teachers' pay, the biggest element in education spending, is determined nationally, local authorities — it is said — have little influence over their own

education budgets. What nonsense. What more influence can there be than the job of raising the budget required, determining priorities for expenditure, and determining the distribution of resources to apply in its areas in other words, holding the purse strings? The recent education white paper seems to threaten the very existence of education authorities. But that is just another challenge that we must accept.

Even if a vast majority of schools do opt out, there is still an important job to be done and our task is to demonstrate that we are the best people to do it.

Local government has never been losing and gaining powers and responsibilities. Councils have often chosen to pioneer services. They used to have health, gas and water responsibilities. Next year,

with the phased introduction of Care in the Community and the transfer of funds from the social security department, a huge increase in local authority financial responsibilities will commence.

Moreover, there is a much wider role for local government than just service provision, which is about ensuring the quality of life in its area, shaping and planning the environment in which people want to live and work. Councils should be reflecting the culture of their communities, and encouraging open debate and influence in their areas, whether in local affairs or through national and European policies.

They should seek to do that not by appearing to frustrate government policies or compete with them but by clearly demonstrating the value they can add. The horizons are widening not contracting.

The author is county treasurer of West Sussex and chairman of the Finance working group of the Society of County Treasurers.

Preened and primped, the new-look NHS

Marketing has been cold-shouldered by hospitals, but managers are gradually accepting that it may genuinely be needed, Edward Fennell reports

When Christine Miles, marketing manager for Middlesex and University College Hospital, recently became the first woman winner of the prestigious KPMG management consulting prize at Cranfield School of Management it summed up the change of culture within the health service.

So will we now see a marketing manager on the cast of the BBC television series *Casualty* working out market segmentation as the walking wounded stagger down the wards at Holby General? Probably so. Ms Miles apparently had reviewed the application of marketing planning to clinical services and she is now applying what she learned throughout her "unit".

Whatever the feeling about the NHS reforms, and the marketing philosophy that accompanies them,

there is no doubt that a new approach is being taken by many managers in the NHS both to what they provide and how they relate to their "customers" and "clients". Public relations and communications are the manifestation of this approach. Yet it is also the area with which the medical establishment feels most uncomfortable. As one observer of NHS reforms said, "If you say 'public relations' in a medical context, people either think it's a cover up job or that it's a waste of money and that resources should be spent on services."

However, there is much to be said for individual hospitals clarifying public understanding of what they can provide and for improving communications with local doctors and other agencies such as schools and social services.

Last year, St Thomas's Hospital, in London, hired Kinross & Ren-

der, one of the few public relations agencies to specialise in NHS work, to undertake an "audit" of its communications with GPs, with its own staff and with the media.

The survey uncovered many basic misconceptions about what was available in the hospital — not least amongst its own staff. In some cases, facilities were being under-used because of lack of information.

As a result, St Thomas's has appointed a director of public relations to try to bring coherence to the hospital's relationships with its various audiences.

Part of the problem, according to Sara Render, a director of Kinross & Render, is the tendency of the medical establishment to use jargon. This has been compounded by the vocabulary springing up around trust status and the "internal market" of the NHS. "There is

a desperate need for straight talking in the NHS right now," Ms Render said. "The excessive use of jargon is prohibiting public discussion about what is happening and it leaves the general public confused. There are real skills needed to communicate in language which is accessible to the lay audience. It is also the first step in establishing a dialogue with the public to find out what they want."

In essence, the strategies being recommended by Kinross & Render to NHS clients are those that apply to any local authority or other public service. "Demand for services is limitless and yet resources are finite so you have to define your audiences and make clear to them what you can offer and what is restricted. You then have to decide in what form you can communicate that information most effectively. Then you have to put in



Taking the initiative: Ms Render advises clients to consider the most effective form of communication

place a strategy to do the job." Although money for public relations is scarce in the NHS, the service's great asset is the level of public interest and the willingness of the media to give it coverage. Unfortunately, most contact between hospitals and journalists

occurs in time of crisis. Kinross & Render recommends that hospitals should cultivate relations with their local press so that journalists can help to convey what a hospital is doing and the conditions under which it is working. "The NHS is a 'people business' and good communications are essential to its success," Ms Render says. "Without lots more money there are some things you can't make better about medical care — but at least with good communications you can make the best use of what you've got."

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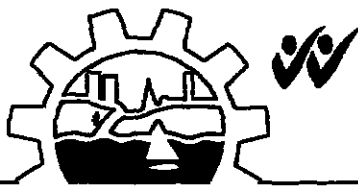
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